

THE
MORAL TALES
OF
M. MARMONTEL.

Translated from the French.

BY
C. DENIS, AND R. LLOYD.

VOL. II.

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THE
MORAL TALES
OF
M. MARMONTEL.

THE BAD MOTHER.

AMONGST the monstrous productions of nature, we may justly place the heart of a mother who loves one of her children exclusive of all the rest.

I don't mean that discerning tenderness that distinguishes in those seedling plants which will best answer one's care and culture; what I talk of is that blind fondness, that prepossession and dislike that some have in choosing one idol, and making several victims among the little innocents that they have brought into the world, and which are all equally entitled to a parent's love. 'Tis of this wandering from nature, this unjust partiality so common and so shameful to humanity that I am giving an example.

The governor of one of our sea-ports, a town of great trade, who had endeared himself to the inhabitants by his strict observance to suppress vexations of all kinds, made it his constant rule to support the weak, and keep the strong in awe.

This good governor, whose name was Carandon, died, with all his virtues, poor, and almost insolvent. He left a daughter whom nobody sought for in marriage, because she had great pride, little beauty, and no fortune. It happened, however, that there was a rich merchant, who, in acknowledgment of favours received from her father, made her an offer of marriage. Mr. Carandon had been so friendly, so beneficent, we are all under such obligations to him, said the honest Mr. Coron, so was the merchant called, that it is but merely doing justice to his memory, to shew our gratitude to his daughter. In consequence he made his proposal to the lady, and Miss Carandon, with a great seeming reluctance, did him the honour to accept of his hand, provided nevertheless, as it was but reasonable, that she should be absolute mistress in all that regarded her house and family. The great respect that Coron had for the memory of the father, was transmitted to the daughter. He consulted her as an oracle; and if perchance it should so happen that they did not quite agree in their opinions, she knew how to silence him at once, by saying, with an imposing tone, my father . . . Coron did not give her time to finish her period, but immediately owned himself in the wrong.

This good-natured husband died long before old age; and left her two sons, which she had the complaisance to permit him to be the father of. When he was on his death-bed, he thought it high time to settle his affairs, and make his will. It was always, said Madam Coron, a maxim with Mr. Carandon, my father, that, in order to keep children in awe, they should be left dependent on their mother, so that she might dispense their father's wealth to them according to their deserts.

Mr.

Mr. Carandon's maxim was enough, and Coron's last will and testament was made accordingly. His whole inheritance was deposited in his wife's hands, with the fatal power to distribute it to their children, in what proportion she thought fit. The eldest of these two children was her darling; not that he had any perfections either of body or mind more than the youngest, nay, far from it; but she had liked to have died when she brought him into the world; he was the first that made her feel the pains of labour, and the joys of delivery; in short, he engrossed her tenderness so much, that she had not the least for any body else. And to excuse her partiality, she gave all the bad reasons of a bad mother.

Young Jacquinot was her neglected son. His mother scarce ever saw him; and if she did, it was only to scold and find fault. The poor child, always in awe and fear, durst not look up, and never answered but in trembling. He has, said she, just the vulgar soul of his father, and what you call the very air of those sort of folks.

As for her eldest, who had been permitted to be as wilful, stubborn, and impertinent as is possible; he was the pink of gentility. His untractableness was deemed a becoming pride, and his humours too great a sensibility. One of his chief perfections was, that he never gave up his opinion when he was in the right; now you must know that he never was in the wrong. The flatterers never ceased admiring him; he looked so much of the gentleman, and had the honour to be very like Madam his mother. This eldest son was called L'etang, (for it was not thought proper to let him bear his father's name). This eldest son then had masters of all sorts. The lessons were all for him, but little Jacquinot reaped the benefit of

them; so that, in a few years, Jacquinot knew all that had been taught to his brother, who for his part knew nothing at all.

Goody nurse, and other old gossips, who constantly attribute to children their own bright thoughts, and make them say so many pretty sayings, as they knew Madam Coron's foible, they endeavoured to make her believe, which she readily did, that her eldest son was a prodigy for one of his age. But the masters less complaisant, or more indiscreet, when they complained of the indocility and inattention of her beloved eldest, never ceased bestowing their praises on the youngest. They did not say precisely that L'etang was a fool; but they all agreed that little Jacquinot had a great deal of wit. The mother's vanity was hurt; and by an injustice, that one would hardly believe in nature, were it not that we see every day such examples, she redoubled her hatred for the poor boy, was vexed at the progress he made in his learning, and was resolved to save her spoiled darling the mortification of the comparison.

However, a very moving circumstance that happened, roused in her the sentiments of nature; but that little return to virtue, only humbled, without correcting her. Jacquinot was about ten years old, and L'etang was near fifteen, when their mother fell dangerously ill. The eldest was very much taken up with his pleasures, and very little with his mother's health. It is the punishment of a weak mother, to doat upon an unnatural child. Her disorder encreased, and she was thought to be in imminent danger. Jacquinot perceived it, and his dear little heart was seized with grief and apprehension; his impatient longing to see his mother broke thro' his constraint: for he was never suffered to make his appearance
but

but when called for. But, in short, his tenderness gave him courage. He took the opportunity, as the door happen'd to be left a-jar, to steal into the room: he softly, with a trembling step, approached the bed. Is it you, my son? said she.—No, mamma, 'tis Jacquinot. This answer, full of innocence and reproach, stung his unjust mother with shame and remorse; but some few feigned caresses of her good-for-nothing favourite, gave him back all the ascendant he had before; and Jacquinot was neither more beloved, nor less neglected.

Madam Coron was scarce recovered from her illness, when she resolved to send Jacquinot out of the way. Her pretence was, that L'etang, naturally lively, was too susceptible of dissipation to have a companion in his studies; and that the impertinent predilection of masters for one child that was more humble and caressing, might discourage another, whose character of a higher stamp, and less pliable, required more care and attention; and therefore she would have L'etang to be the only object of their instruction. Accordingly Jacquinot was sent to school.

L'etang was no sooner turned of sixteen, but he packed off all his masters, mathematics, natural philosophy, music, &c. &c. who left him as much improved as when they began with him. He then entered the academy, to perform his exercises, in which he succeeded just as much as he had done in his studies; and at the age of twenty, he appeared in the world with all the self-sufficiency of a blockhead, that had heard talk of every thing, and knew nothing.

Jacquinot had now finished his college education; and his mother was quite surfeited with the praises that were bestowed upon him from every quarter. 'Tis mighty well, said she; since he has

so much learning and virtue, the church is the fittest thing for him, I will have him take orders.

Unhappily Jacquinot had no relish for an ecclesiastic state of life. He begged of his mother not to insist upon it. Why do you imagine, said she, with a haughty severe look, that I have wherewithal to settle you in the world? I would have you to know that I have not. Your father did not die so rich as people fancy; his fortune is barely sufficient to make a proper establishment for your elder brother. As for you, Sir, you may take your choice, the church or the army. I can either get the nomination to a small living, or purchase for you an ensign's commission in a marching regiment, and that is all I can do for you. Jacquinot answered her, with great respect, that there were other professions in life more fit for a merchant's son. At these words, the daughter of monsieur Carandon was ready to faint with grief and shame, to have brought into the world so groveling, low-minded a son, so unworthy of her extraction, and ordered him never to appear in her sight again. Young Coron was greatly troubled to have incurred his mother's indignation, and retired not without sighs and tears, resolving to try whether fortune would be less cruel to him than nature. He heard that there was a ship bound to the Leeward Islands just ready to sail, and he was determined to go on board. He wrote to his mother, acquainting her of his design, requesting her consent and blessing, and what she thought proper to give him to begin the world with. The two first articles were amply granted, but the last with a sparing œconomy.

Madam Coron, much pleased at this happy ridance, would see him before he embarked, and shed some tears as she took her leave of him. His
brother

brother likewise vouchsafed to wish him a good voyage. These were the first caresses he had ever received from them. His tender heart was overcome with joy; yet he durst not presume to ask the favour of hearing from them; but he had a school-fellow that he loved, and who sincerely loved him; and he conjured him in the name of friendship to write to him often, and let him know how his mother did.

As for his mother, she had now no other concern but in what manner to establish her dearly beloved. He chose the law. They obtained for him honorary degrees, and he was soon numbered amongst the counsellors at the bar. Nothing was now wanting but an advantageous match. A rich heiress was proposed, but her guardians insisted upon Madam Coron's making over her whole fortune to her son. She had the folly to consent to it; and left herself barely a maintenance, fully convinced that her son's wealth would be always at her disposal.

Mr. L'etang was now five and twenty years old, a little squat counsellor, fat and round, neglecting his wife, taking much care of his own dear person, and very little of what concerned the law. As it was fashionable to have a somebody that was not his wife, L'etang thought proper to let all the world know that he had an amour. A young person that he ogled one evening at the play-house, answered him in the same language, received him at her lodgings with great politeness, and assured him that he was a charming man, which he had no manner of difficulty in believing; and in a very short time she disembarassed him of about ten thousand crowns. But as there are no everlasting passions, this ungrateful beauty left him, ere three months were expired, for a young English lord,

every whit as foolish, but much richer, and more magnificent than her dupe. L'etang could not conceive how it was possible for any one to quit such a man as he was. He resolved to mortify her pride, by taking a mistress in higher vogue, and enriching her with his presents. His new conquest procured him a multitude of rivals; and when he considered what a crowd of adorers sigh'd in vain, he enjoyed the pleasure of fancying himself so much the more amiable, as he was happier than they. However, the lady perceiving that he was not quite free from uneasiness, had a mind to convince him that there was nothing in the world she would not abandon for him; and proposed at the same time, in order to get rid of a sett of importunate troublesome visitors, that they two should take a trip to Paris, and there live privately and obscurely, and have no other pleasure but that of enjoying their mutual happiness. L'etang was charmed at this instance of her fondness. All is prepared for the journey; they arrive at the metropolis, and chose for their retreat lodgings near the *Palais Royal*. Fatima, so his mistress was called, desired to have a coach to take the air in, which was readily granted. Mr. L'etang was surprized at the number of friends he acquired in that polite city; good-natured friends, who had never seen him before, but upon the report of his superior merit, came in crowds to have the honour of his acquaintance. Fatima received no company but what he approved of, so that he was sure of her, and of her friends. Nevertheless this charming woman had a foible; she believed in dreams. One night she happened to have a dream, which she could not get out of her head. L'etang insisted upon knowing what it was that took up her attention so seriously. Why I dreamt, said she,

she, that I was in a most delightful apartment. There was a magnificent bed of a rich damask of three colours, the hangings, settees, and chairs of the same; large pier-glasses, with noble frames of burnished gold; embossed India cabinets, the finest japan jars, and the prettiest china josses that ever were seen. All this was trifling; there was a toilet set out; methought I drew near it; ah! what did I perceive? My heart is still in a flutter; a complete set of diamonds ranged in a case: ah! and what diamond? an aigrette of the sweetest pattern! the most brilliant ear-rings of the first water! a solitaire in the richest taste, and an esclavage with an endless chain! I know very well, Sir, that something extraordinary will happen to me. This dream has made too strong an impression on my mind not to signify something; and my dreams generally prove realities.

In vain Mr. L'etang endeavoured to persuade her that dreams were of no kind of moment. For she insisted that this last signified a great deal; and she ended by saying, she was apprehensive that some one of his rivals would propose to effectuate it. He was then obliged to capitulate, and, bating some articles, accomplish it himself. You may judge whether this first essay cured her of the habit of dreaming. She took such a liking to it, and had such frequent visions, that honest Coron's fortune was almost reduced to a mere dream likewise. Mr. L'etang's young wife, who was much dissatisfied with his journey, laid in her claim; and petitioned to be separated from a husband who had abandoned her. So that after paying her portion, which he was obliged to return, his income was greatly diminished.

Gaming is the last resource. L'etang thought himself an excellent player at piquet; some of his

friends who went partners, always betted on his side, whilst another of them played against him; every time he discarded, nothing could be more judicious, cryed one, that laid on his cards. Nobody can play better, said another! to be sure nobody could play better; but then he never had any of the aces. Whilst his ruin was thus hurrying on, the faithful Fatima who perceived it, dreamed one night that she had quitted him; and the next morning she did it in effect. L'etang could not bear the thoughts of falling from his usual splendor, and was resolved not to lessen his expences; so that in a short time he was absolutely undone.

He was reduced to his last shifts, when his mother, who had been no better an œconomist than himself of her allowance, wrote to him for some money. He made answer that he was extremely sorry; but far from being in a condition to send her any, he was in the greatest want of some himself. The alarm was already spread among his creditors, so that it was who should first seize upon the remains of his fortune. Ah! what have I done, cry'd his afflicted mother? I have stript myself of every thing for a son that has squandered it all away.

During this time, what was become of poor Jacquinot? Why, Jacquinot, with a good heart, sound judgment, wit enough, a very handsome person, and his little venture, arrived safe at St. Domingo. 'Tis well known how easy it is for a Frenchman, who has good morals, and a good person, to make an establishment on the islands. The name of Coron, his own sagacity and industry, soon acquired him the confidence and friendship of the inhabitants; so that with the helps that were lent him, he acquired a plantation which
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he carefully cultivated, and which soon grew to a flourishing condition. Trade, which was then in full vigour, enriched him in a short time ; for in the space of five years he was the object of the desires and wishes of all the rich and pretty widows and maidens of the island. When, alas ! his college companion, who till then had always sent him agreeable news, wrote to him that his brother was ruined, and his mother, abandoned by all the world, was reduced to the utmost distress and poverty. He wet the fatal letter with his tears. Ah ! my dear mother ! he cry'd, I will fly to your relief. He would not trust it to any but himself. An accident might happen ; the infidelity, sloveness, or negligence of a stranger might either deprive her, or bring too late what he was preparing for his mother's assistance, and so let her expire in want and despair. Nothing ought to withhold a son, said he to himself, when a mother's life and happiness are at stake.

With these sentiments young Coron immediately realised his effects, so as to carry them over with him. He sold his plantation, and turned every thing into ready-money. Such a sacrifice gave him no concern ; but he could not forbear regretting a treasure much more precious, which he was going to leave in America. Lucella, the young widow of a rich planter, who had left her in exceeding great circumstances, had cast her eyes on Coron with one of those penetrating looks that seem to dive into the heart and unfold the soul ; one of those looks that determine the inclination, and whose sudden and resistless effect is often taken for sympathy. She thought she perceived in the young man every thing that was conducive to make a prudent and virtuous woman happy ; and this passion which she conceived for him,

him, did not wait, to shew itself, for sober reflection. Coron, on his side, had given her in his heart the preference before all her rivals, as the most worthy to captivate an honest and wise man. Lucella had a majestic moving air, the greatest liveliness, and yet the greatest modesty in her eyes; her complexion not of the fairest, but as fresh and blooming as a rose; fine dark hair, teeth of the most polished white, the shape and gait of one of Diana's nymphs, with the looks and smiles of the graces. With all these charms, Lucella was endued with a courageous mind, a greatness of soul, a justness in her ideas, and that uprightness of heart, which gives us an opportunity of complimenting ourselves when we say such a woman has the soul of a man. Lucella was above disguising a virtuous inclination; such a mask was only fit for little minds. No sooner had Coron owned his passion for her, but she confessed, without any hesitation, the same for him; and their mutual love growing more tender and binding every day by reflection, they longed for the happy moment which was to cement their joy at the altar. Some disputes about the inheritance of Lucella's husband had retarded their felicity. Those disputes were on the point of being adjusted, when the letter of Coron's friend came to drag him from all that was dear to him next his mother. He went to the beauteous widow and shewed her the letter, at the same time asking her advice. I flatter myself, said she, that you don't want any. Turn your effects into commercial goods, fly to your mother's relief, do honour to all and every body; at your return my fortune is at your command. If I die before you come back, my will is made in your favour; if I live to see you again, the will is of no consequence; you know

know what you are entitled to. Coron, overcome with gratitude and admiration, seized her virtuous hand, which he wet with tears of love, expatiating on her praises. Let us, said she, have none of these weaknesses, these European prejudices. When a woman behaves as she ought to do, it is looked upon there as a wonder ; as if we were not endued with a soul as well as men. What would you think of me if I should testify an amazement, and look upon the pure pious movement of your filial virtuous heart as a phenomenon ? O ! pardon me, replied Coron, what else could I expect from your exalted goodness ? but whilst I am enchanted with your principles, your sentiments, and your virtues, I may admire, though not be surprised. Go then, said she, embracing him, fulfil your duty, and hasten your return.

Coron embarked with all his riches. The voyage was very favourable till they came off of the Canaries. There they were pursued by an Algerine pirate. They crouded sail in hopes of escaping. The pirate gained fast upon them, and the captain of the ship, terrified at the danger of being boarded, was for striking the colours. O ! my poor dear mother, cried Coron, looking at the chests that contained his wealth ; and then tearing his hair with grief and rage. No, said he, the barbarous African shall sooner tear my heart out. Then addressing himself to the commanding officer and to the rest of the crew, What, my friends, said he, shall we tamely surrender ? shall we suffer this robber to load us with irons, drag us to a loathsome dungeon, and then expose us to sale like so many brute beasts ? Are we not armed ? Are those miscreants then invulnerable, or have they more courage than we ? They seem inclined to board us, let them board, we shall give them a closer and warmer reception. Coron's resolution

resolution animated the whole crew, and the captain, embracing him, thanked him for having given so brave an example.

All is disposed for a vigorous defence. The ships are grappled. The pirate boards. Death flies promiscuous on both sides, amidst a cloud of smoke and fire. The fire ceases, the smoke dissipates, the sword is now employed. Coron, his sabre in hand, made a terrible slaughter: soon as an African approached, he flew upon him, crying, my dear mother! Like the last effort of nature in despair, his rage was as that of a lioness that defends her young: So that one of the most tender-hearted good-natured men in the world became in a moment furious and bloody-minded. The captain beheld him every where, his arms bathed in gore. It is not a man, said he to his companions, 'tis a god that fights for us! Such an example excited their courage. At last Coron met the chief of the pirates, O heavens, he cried, my mother! that was the word of command. So saying, he rushed upon him, and ran him through the heart. From that instant the victory was decided. The few that remained of the Algerine crew called for quarter, and were put in irons. The ship, with Coron and their prize, arrived safe in France; and this worthy son, without giving himself a night's rest, posted away with his treasure to rescue a dying mother. She was indeed almost expiring, in a condition worse than death itself. Destitute of every conveniency and comfort of life, and left to the care of a servant, who, not being much better provided for herself, waited upon her with a kind of indifference and scornful pity. She had forbid this servant, because she was ashamed to be seen in so miserable a situation, to let any body in but the priest and the charitable physician, that now
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and then called upon her. Coron came, and was accordingly refused admittance.

Go and let your mistress know, said he to the maid, that I am here. Pray, who are you? answered the servant.—My name is Jacquinot. The maid went in to let her mistress know, that a stranger desired to speak with her.—Alas! who is the stranger?—He says his name is Jacquinot. At that name her heart was so violently moved, that it almost deprived her of life. Ah! my son, said she with a feeble voice, and opening her dying eyes, ah! my son, at what a dreadful time do you behold your mother! Your hand is come to close my eyes. How great was the grief of her tender, pious son to see that mother, whom he had left in wealth and prosperity, lying on a miserable bed, without scarce a rag of a curtain, the picture of poverty and wretchedness. Oh! my dear mother, he cried, throwing himself on the bed of woe; his sighs stopped the utterance of his voice, and his tears, which he shed on his mother's bosom, were for some time the only expressions of his love and grief. Heaven has punished me, resumed Madam Coron, to have loved too much an unnatural son, and to have—O my dear mother, interrupted the pious young man, do but live, and all will be well again. Fortune has heaped riches on me, and I am come to shower them into the lap of nature. 'Tis for you that they are bestowed upon me. O live! I have wherewithal to make life desirable. Ah! my child, if life can ever be welcome to me, it will be only in giving me an opportunity of wiping off the stain of my injustice, and of loving a son whom I disinherited, and of whom I am not worthy to be called mother. At these words she covered her face, as if ashamed to behold the light. Dear Madam, he cried, pressing her

her in his arms, deprive me not of the sight of my mother. I am come from a distant world, and crossed the seas to seek and succour you. As he was thus talking, the priest and the physician arrived. These gentlemen, my son, have been the only comfort heaven left me; had it not been for their charity, you had now been motherless. Coron embraced them. O my friends! said he, my benefactors! under what obligations have you not laid me? were it not for you, I had no more a mother. Endeavour to recal her to life. I am rich, and am come to make her happy. Redouble your attention, your consolation, and your care; restore her to me, and command my gratitude. The physician very prudently considered, that this agitation was too violent for his patient; wherefore he desired him to retire, and to depend on their zeal; only that he would go and prepare wholesome and convenient lodgings, and that she should be conveyed thither that evening.

The change of air, good food, or rather that revolution which joy had caused, and the calm tranquillity that succeeded it, insensibly restored her organs to their wonted functions. Profound grief was the cause of her illness, returning comfort was her cure.

Coron was informed, that his unhappy brother had perished by an ignominious death. I draw the veil over the shocking catastrophe that he but too much deserved. The knowledge of it was kept from his mother, as being too weak to support so horrid a piece of news. However, she was informed of it when her health was quite re-established. The wounds of her heart bled afresh, and maternal tears trickled down her cheeks. But heaven, in depriving her of a son unworthy of her affection, gave her back another who deserved all that
nature

nature has rendered most endearing, and virtue most amiable. He communicated to his mother all that his soul longed for, which was, to encircle together in his arms his mother and his future spouse. Madam Coron was delighted at the proposal, very glad to accompany her son to the West Indies, and leave a town where her indiscretion and her misfortunes were known to every body, and of course hateful to her. She went on board with joy, and the moment she embarked her spirits revived. Heaven, that protects virtue and piety, gave them a favourable passage. Lucella received her lover's mother as if she had been her own. Hymen completed their happiness in the bonds of marriage. They still enjoy that unalterable bliss, those pure and uninterrupted pleasures which are the reward of virtue.



THE GOOD MOTHER.

A MORAL TALE.

A Mother's care of her children is, of all duties, the most incumbent and the most strictly observed in nature. It is an universal sentiment that subdues all other passions, and even surpasses the love of life. It makes the most ferocious animals tame and caressing; the most indolent become indefatigable, and the fearful courageous; none of them forsake their young, but at the moment they can be of no farther use to them. 'Tis only amongst the human species that we find odious examples of a premature abandonment.

In

In an age, when vice is disguised under a thousand seducing forms, 'tis then that the most virtuous inclinations and the sweetest tempers require a constant watchful eye to lead them through the dangerous paths of the world. The more the rocks are hid, the greater the danger; and how shall the frail bark of innocence and happiness escape them, without the guidance of a prudent and skilful pilot? What would have been, for example, the fate of Miss Troëne, if heaven had not formed for her such a mother as is seldom found? This estimable widow devoted the prime of her life to the education of her only child. And this was her way of reasoning at the age of five and twenty.

I have lost my husband, said she; I have nothing now to consider of but my daughter and myself. Shall I live for myself? Shall I live for my daughter? I own that I have great inducement to be still one of the world; and I like it. But if I follow my bent, I forsake my child, and run the risk of her happiness and my own. For, grant that a bustling, genteel life has all the charms it is supposed to have; how long may I reasonably expect to enjoy it? How very few of my years, which pass so quick away, have I to be courted, or taken notice of? How many may I make a good use of in my retirement, taking care of my child? This vain world, that now smiles upon me, will, in a short time, reject me without mercy; and if my daughter should follow my example, and be unhappy thro' my neglect, how could I answer it to myself? No: let us retire, and make our retreat as honourable and comfortable as I can. Surely I may give for my daughter, who is my all, a tumultuous
crowd,

crowd, by whom very soon I shall be entirely forgot.

From that time, this prudent mother made it her study to be the friend, as well as companion of her daughter ; but that was no easy task. Emilia, so was the young lady named, had received from nature a soul susceptible of the most lively impressions ; and her mother, who observed her constantly, felt a doubtful joy in perceiving in her that sensibility which procures so much happiness or so much distress. Happy the man, she would say sometimes, happy the man my daughter marries, if he proves worthy of her affection ; and if, by his esteem and friendship, he can make her feel how sensible he himself is of the tender regard she has for him. But woe to him if he slights, or strives to mortify her. Her nice punctilio, once hurt, would be their common plague. For even if I should happen to make her too hastily some little reproach, or perhaps find fault when she was not so much to blame, immediately the tears start from her eyes, and her depressed heart loses all its resolution. Nothing so easy as to lead her ; nothing more easy than to make her refractory.

Though the manner in which Madam Troène lived, was reserved, yet it was very decent, and suitable to one of her condition ; quite conformable to her main view, of watching with a careful eye over Emilia's conduct, and of reflecting at leisure on the choice of a husband fit for her. A crowd of suitors, enamoured with the charms of the daughter, paid, as usual, their court to the mother. Amongst these was the marquis of Verglan, who, to his great misfortune, was exceeding handsome. His looking-glass, and the ladies, had told it him so often, that he must perforce believe it. He listened to himself with great com-

complaisance, beheld himself with pleasure; and charmed with his own smiles, was eternally his own admirer. There was no fault to be found with him in respect to politeness: But then it was so cool and so reserved, in comparison of the regard he honoured himself with, that it was very plain he held the first place in his own esteem. He might have possessed without seeking for, all the graces of nature, which he spoiled in affecting them. As for his understanding, it wanted a little more precision, or rather reflection. Nobody could talk better, had he but known what he was about to say. But his first care was to be always of a different opinion from every body else. Right or wrong, it was all the same to him. He was sure to dazzle, persuade, and seduce whomever he pleased. He knew, by heart, all the fine speeches of a lady's dressing-room; those pretty sayings that mean nothing. He was perfectly versed in all the little scandalous anecdotes, both of court and city; who was the lover of yesterday, who that of the present, and who would be that of to-morrow; and how many times in one year such a lady had changed her gallant. He was likewise acquainted with a somebody, that should be nameless, who refused being on the list, though he was sure of supplanting all his rivals, had he thought it worth his while.

This young fop was the son of an intimate friend of Emilia's father; and Madam Troëne was wont to speak of him to her daughter with concern. What a pity is it, said she, that this young man is so spoiled. He was very well endowed by nature, and might have succeeded in any thing. He had already but too well succeeded in Emilia's heart. What may seem ridiculous in a mother's eyes, does not always appear in the same

same light in those of the daughter's. Youth is ever indulgent to youth; and there are what may be called agreeable faults.

Verglan was not insensible to Emilia's charms, which were rather too simple, but that might mend; and he gave himself very little trouble about pleasing; but when the out-lines are drawn, every thing contributes to make the impression deeper. The very unsettledness of this wild young man was an allurement for Emilia; she perceived the danger of losing him; and nothing hastens so much the progress of a growing passion as jealousy.

Whenever Verglan gave an account of himself to Madam Troëne, you may be sure there was not one in the world more deserving than he. The widow now and then, without affectation, made him a lecture on modesty. He protested, that no one had a less opinion of himself than he had; that he was convinced, that it was not him that was sought for; that birth and rank had, no doubt, great sway; but as for the rest, it was entirely owing to figure and genius, such as they were; qualifications which he had not acquired, and therefore had no right to value himself on their account.

The more Emilia was charmed to hear and see him, the more care she took to conceal her pleasure. One word of rebuke from her mother would have cut her to the soul; and that nice and tender sensibility made her cautious and fearful to an excess.

However Emilia, that touched so slightly the heart of Verglan, had raised in that of the modest and virtuous Belzors, the most violent, but respectful love. Belzors's character was founded on the basis of a sound judgment, and an up-
right

right heart. A good figure, a sweet and open countenance, that seemed to acquire a new degree of force by the high idea every body had of his mind. One is apt to fancy we read in the physiognomy all that we know to dwell in the heart.

Belzors, whose inclinations were turned to good from his infancy, procured him that inestimable advantage, of yielding to their impulse without precaution or constraint. Decency, civility, candour, that openness which gains our confidence, that severity in morals that commands respect; all these appeared in him with the unaffected ease of nature. Foe to vice, and yet not proud; indulgent to the foibles of others, without contracting any; complying with all innocent diversions, but never seduced by bad examples; he stemmed the torrent of the world; beloved and respected even by those to whom his life was a censure, and the public esteem, as if to mortify their pride, was wont to quote him as a precedent.

Madam Troëne, delighted with the character of this young gentleman, had fixed upon him in her own heart as the most deserving person for her daughter. She seized every opportunity of speaking in his praise, and Emilia applauded with that reservedness, that became one of her age. Madam Troëne was deceived by the unaffected, ingenuous manner in which Emilia behaved to Belzors. As the esteem she had for him was un-mixed with any other sentiment, Emilia was quite at her ease.

She was far from being in that tranquil state, when the dangerous Verglan was in company; so that the painful situation, in which his presence generally threw her, made her appear as if she was fatigued. If ever the mother said any thing

to his advantage, Emilia looked down, and was silent. Methinks, my dear, said she to her daughter, you have no relish for those empty, brilliant graces that the world admires so much. I don't know what they are, replied Emilia, blushing. The good mother concealed her joy; she thought she perceived, by her behaviour, that the simple and modest virtue of Belzors triumphed in her heart, over all the amiable follies of Verglan, and of those that resembled him. An accident, very slight in appearance, but very striking for a watchful, attentive mother, dispelled her illusion.

One of Emilia's talents was to draw in crayons; and she had fixed on flower-painting, as best suited to one of her age. What is more natural than to see a new-blown rose spring from the hand of beauty? Verglan, as it happened, was likewise fond of flowers, and he seldom appeared without a pretty nosegay.

One day, by mere chance, Madam Troëne took notice of Verglan's nosegay. The next day, she saw that Emilia was drawing, perhaps by mere chance, also the very identical flowers of which it was composed. It was natural enough to imagine, that the flowers she had seen the day before, were still in her mind, and might drop from her crayons without reflection. But what was not quite so simple, was the enthusiastic look she had whilst she was drawing them. Her eyes sparkled with the fire of genius; her mouth assumed a lovely smile at every stroke of her hand; and a colour, more lively than the flowers she was about to paint, overspread her beauteous cheeks. You seem pleased, said her mother in a careless way, with your work! It is not possible, answered Emilia, to represent nature truly, except you have it before your eyes.

And

And yet she had never expressed it more faithfully.

Some days after, Verglan came with a fresh nosegay; and Madam Troëne, without seeming to do it, observed every particular flower; and in Emilia's next task, the nosegay was fairly represented. The good mother continued her remarks; and every trial confirming her suspicions, redoubled her uneasiness. Alas! said she, I am alarming myself at what, perhaps, is very innocent. Let us find out whether she has any finesse in it or not.

Emilia's studies and talents were unknown to most of her mother's acquaintance. As madam Troëne's design was only to amuse her, and make her pass agreeably her leisure hours, so as to use her to retirement, and save her imagination from the danger of musing, and her active feeling soul from the tiresome yawns of idleness, she neither prided herself, nor her daughter, for those talents she took so much care to cultivate. But one day, as they were alone with Belzors, and that the conversation turned on the precious advantage of knowing how to employ one's time, and be sufficient for one's self; My daughter, said Madam Troëne, has made herself an amusement that, I think, she grows fonder of more and more. You must see her drawings. Emilia opened her book, and Belzors, quite enchanted, never ceased admiring her work. How pure! how charming! he cried, are the pleasures of innocence! Vice may torment itself for ever in the vain pursuit of what it never can find out. Own, Madam, that the time we occupy, passes quick away; you have fixed it; it returns, and appears again to your eyes. Time is never lost but by the idle. Madam Troëne listened to him with

with a secret pleasure. Emilia thought his reflections very reasonable, but was not in the least moved by them.

Some time after Verglan paid them a visit. Do you know, said Madam Troëne to him, that Emilia has received great applause from Belzore on her talent in painting? I must have your opinion of it too. Emilia blushed, hesitated and stammer'd that, that . . . she had nothing finished, and desired her to wait till she had done something worthy to be shewn. She did not doubt, but that it was a snare of her mother's to draw her in. Since she makes a mystery of it, there must be something in it. She was afraid that Verglan would have discovered his flowers, and found out the secret motive of her painting them. My daughter is in love with the coxcomb, and my fears were but too justly grounded.

As Madam Troëne was on every side continually solicited for her daughter, her objection was still Emilia's youth, and the resolution that she had made, never to controul her in her choice. That choice however was all her dread. Verglan, thought she, at least in all appearance, will have the preference, and he is possess'd of every quality, that is conducive to make a wife unhappy. If I declare to Emilia my wishes, if I do but let her have a glimpse of them, I know her scrupulous delicacy, she will be the victim of her duty. And can I require so painful a sacrifice? Heaven forbid! No, let her own inclination decide it; yet I may endeavour to enlighten and direct that inclination, and that is the only lawful authority that I am impow'ed to exert. I am very sure of the goodness of her heart, and of the solidity of her judgment. Let then the experience of my age supply the want of it in

hers; Oh! may she see thro' her mother's eyes, and yet believe if possible, that she follows her own inclination.

Every time that Belzors and Verglan happened to be of the company, Madam Troëne turned the conversation on the manners, customs, and maxims of the world; she animated the dispute, and, without seeming to side with either party, gave each of them room to display their characters, which was her sole view. The little adventures that happen every day, which furnish idle conversation for the tea-table, were mostly the subject of their chat. Verglan, light, lively, and satirical, pleaded constantly in behalf of all that is called fashion. Belzors, with more modesty, boldly supported the cause of virtue and morality.

The compromising the altercations of Count Auberive and his wife, engrossed at that time all the talk of the town. 'Twas said, that after a smart quarrel, and bitter complaints of their mutual infidelity, they both agreed that they were quit; and that their dispute ended by laughing at each others folly, at having been jealous without being in love. The preliminaries were, that Auberive consented to see the Chevalier du Clang his wife's lover, and she promised to receive in the politest manner the Marchioness of Talba, to whom Auberive paid his addresses; that all the parties met at supper, ratified the preliminaries, and proclaimed peace, and that never did two pair of lovers seem to agree with more harmony.

At this description, Verglan cry'd out, that it was wisely done. You talk of good old times! said he; shew me an example in the manners of our forefathers, any thing comparable to this.

Formerly

Formerly, an infidelity put the whole family in a ferment. A wife was beat and lock'd up. If the husband exerted the power which he pretended to have, his virtuous and disconsolate spouse was obliged to devour her grief, or give it vent in her distant apartment, as in an obscure prison. And if she should chance to imitate her fickle husband, what dangers did she not run? No less was at stake, than her's and her lover's life. They had the folly to make a man's honour depend on his wife's virtue; and a husband, who was not the less esteemed for having amours of his own, must be despised for those of his wife! Upon my honour, I am surprised how any one, in those barbarous ages, durst venture on matrimony. The ties of it were then indeed a real chain. Now-a-days you see peace, compliance, and freedom reign throughout the family. If perchance the married couple love one another, 'tis mighty well, they are happy, and don't think of parting; if they outlive their passion, why then, like honest reasonable folks, they declare it and acquit each other of their vows of fidelity. They cease to be lovers to commence friends. Now that is what I call sweet, social, conjugal manners, that would almost tempt me to marry.—What do you think it then a very natural thing for a wife to be the confidant of her husband's amours? And the husband to be his wife's procurer?—No doubt; provided it be a mutual piece of politeness. Is any thing more natural than to repose one's trust in those, who confide in us! and so settle an intercourse of friendly offices! Can one have a more intimate friend than one's wife? And can she have a nearer one than her husband? Who can one be free with, if not with bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh? And when, by sad

misshap, you can find no longer any amusement at home, what can you do better than to look for it abroad? And each endeavour to procure it for themselves, without noise, without jealousy?

Nothing can have a more smiling aspect, said Belzors, than this new method of yours; but you and I have a great deal to go thro', before we can perfectly enjoy it. First of all you must know how to renounce your own self-esteem, and that of your wife and children; you must accustom yourself to look upon your dear half, whom you despise so much, as to barter her. Pshaw! interrupted Verglan, foolish scruples and prejudices of education! where lies the obstacle to mutual-esteem, if it is decided there is no shame? Decided or not decided, reply'd Belzors, all society must be then dissolved. The holy and inviolable bands of Hymen manifest the sacred ties of nature. Remember, my good friend, that if there be no duties imposed by heaven on parents, what can be expected from those of their children? All these links put together form but one chain. The private and particular family disturbances of former times, were very violent; but they did not affect the general. The whole mass of morals was sound, take it all in all, and an accidental wound was soon healed; now it is a mere mouldering heap, that a slow, but sure poison consumes away; and then, my dear Verglan, we have as yet no idea of those pure and heart-felt joys, that a virtuous and prudent couple taste in the sweet recess of their domestic privacy; that union which was the delight of their youth, and is the comfort of their ripened years. What if now-a-days a mother should be afflicted with the wild inconsiderate follies of her son? what if a father be cast down by some unforeseen reverse
of

of fortune? are not they a refuge, a comfort to each other? Or else they must seek for a foreign bosom where to depose their troubles, and where very seldom they meet with relief.

My dear Belzors, said Verglan, you talk like an oracle; but pray who told you, that it was not much better for married people to love one another, and be constant if they can. All that I aim at is, to prove, that if unhappily this mutual love should cease, one ought to make one's self as easy as possible, and take other measures, without being obliged to love like our fathers of yore, except you chuse to follow their example. And pray, said Madam Troëne, where lies the objection? The objection, Madam? replied Belzors; why, custom, and the ruling taste to act without shame or decency, just as their passions lead them. I dare say, that Verglan will own, that the present manner of living is very agreeable, and a little variety now and then not at all unacceptable; our own weakness yields to it of course; and who can resist the attack, if the bulwark of morals is destroyed? I destroy nothing, answered Verglan? I only say, that I would have every body live as they think fit; liberty and property! and I approve very much of the resolution of Auberive and his spouse, to forgive reciprocally what is called failings. If they are satisfied, what right has any body else to complain?

As he finished these words, the Marquis d'Auberive was introduced. O my dear Marquis, said Verglan, you are come quite *a propos*; pray tell us if there be any truth in what is related of you? 'tis said that you and your wife are like the two doctors in Moliere, *Wink at my rhubarb, and I'll take no notice of your senna*. Mere nonsense, replied indolently the Marquis. For my part, said

Verglan, I have supported the argument with all my power; but here is Belzors that condemns you without appeal.—And why so? would he not have done the same? My wife is young and handsome, and is an arrant coquette; that is very natural. However, I believe that in the main she may be virtuous; but if she was less so, justice ought to be done. I conceive very well that a man of a more jealous temper than mine might condemn me; but what surprises me is, that Belzors should be the first to disapprove of my conduct! Heretofore I have been accosted with nothing but praises. My behaviour was very natural, and every body congratulates me upon it, as if it was a wonder that one should have sense enough to act reasonably! I am quite confounded with the compliments I daily receive. As for your gentlemen of nice and rigorous principles, I honour them much; but I live for myself. Let every body do the same; the happiest will be the wisest. Pray, interrupted Madam Troëne, on purpose to break the discourse, how does Lady Auberive do?—Exceeding well, Madam, we supped together last night, and I never in my life saw her in better humour. I'd lay a wager, said Verglan, that you will come together again.—Faith, nothing more likely; for, as we left the table, I catch'd myself saying tender things to her.

This first essay made a lively impression on Emilia's mind. Her mother, who perceived it, let her reflections take their free course, and, to keep them to the object, she said, that she could not but admire how opinions depended on characters.—Here are two young men, who have both been educated with equal care; both have been taught the same principles of honour and virtue; and yet how different they are from each other; nevertheless

nevertheless each thinks himself in the right. Emilia, in her heart, would fain have found an excuse for Verglan's espousing so warmly the manners of the age; but how was it possible? Ah! said she to herself, with what unconcern are faith and modesty slighted! How all that ought to be the most sacred in nature is ridiculed! And Verglan is guilty of this indiscretion! Why has he not Belzors's mind?

Some time after, Emilia and her mother were at the play; Belzors and Verglan came to their box; Madam Troëne invited them to take their seats. *Inés* * was represented. The scene where the children were introduced gave Verglan a subject to display his nice criticisms. Belzors, without giving him any attention, was all in tears at the interesting situation; and was not ashamed to let them be seen. What, said Verglan, are you really so weak as to be moved at the sight of those children? What can you have more moving? replied Belzors: Yes, I own that I never hear, without a certain tremor, the tender names of father and mother; I am penetrated with the pathetic ties of nature. Love itself, even the most interesting love, does not touch me near so much. *Inés* was followed by a little piece called *Nanine*; and when it came to the conclusion, Oh! this is too much, said Verglan, that *Dolban* should be in love with the little wench, with all my heart, but to marry her! that's out of character. It may perhaps be a folly, replied Belzors, but I find myself capable of doing just the same; for where virtue and beauty are united, who can answer for their reason? Not a single word of their discourse escaped Madam Troëne; and Emilia, not less attentive, blushed at the advantage Belzors had over his rival.

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* One of La Motte's tragedies.

rival. When the representation was over, the Chevalier d'Olcet appeared with weepers. How comes this about, Chevalier? said Verglan in his airy manner.—'Tis only an old uncle of mine, who has been so kind as to die and leave me ten thousand crowns a year.—Let me embrace you. Your uncle was a man of honour. Ten thousand crowns a year! 'tis charming. Belzors saluted him in his turn; Chevalier, said he, I condole with you for your loss. You have too good a heart to conceive an unnatural joy for his death. 'Tis true, answered the Chevalier, somewhat confounded to have spoken of it so lightly, he was to be sure a long time a father to me, but you know he was very old. That was a motive for patience, replied Belzors, and not one of comfort. A good relation is the best of friends; the riches he bequeaths you will never enable you to purchase such another. For my part, said Verglan, I think that an old uncle must be at best but a very dull friend: And, after all, is it not natural? every one in his turn. The young would be much to be pitied, if the old were to be sempiternal. Belzors waved the discourse, not to give him an unfavourable answer. At every stroke of this contrast, Emilia was in a painful agitation. Her mother beheld with joy the respectful tender air she had when she spoke to Belzors, and the cold indifferent manner in which she answered Verglan's gallantries; but, as she was resolved to have another trial, she invited them both to spend the next evening with her.

Accordingly they came. The company sat down to cards; Verglan and Belzors took the backgammon table. Verglan loved to play deep, and Belzors whatever was most agreeable. Their game began to grow serious; Emilia was amongst the

the lookers on; and the good mother, though playing her cards, cast now and then an eye upon her daughter, and read in her face what passed in her heart. Fortune favoured Belzors. Emilia, tho' much dissatisfied with Verglan's behaviour, was too good not to be concern'd in seeing him lose so considerably. The unthinking youth had no command of himself; he was piqued, and doubled what they played for at first; and, before supper was on table, 'twas all but playing on his word of honour. Vexation and ill humour had gained upon him; he endeavoured to appear agreeable, and shake it off; but the alteration of his countenance testified his inward feelings. He perceived that he was pitied, and that nobody smiled at the *bons mots* which he attempted to hit off. It touched him to the quick, and he was ready to shew marks of resentment when they rose from supper. Belzors, on whom neither his own good luck, nor his rival's discontent, had made any impression, was as mild, civil, and unconcerned as usual. At Verglan's desire, they returned to backgammon. Madam Troëne, who had finished her party, came and looked over theirs; very uneasy at the consequence of it, and hoping it would have her desired effect on Emilia's heart. The success surpassed her expectations. Verglan lost what was almost impossible to lose. His trembling hand, his pale countenance, expressed the trouble he fain would have hid. Belzors, with an endless complaisance, gave him as many revenges and as many doublings as he pleased; and when, by repeated doublings, Verglan had got an opportunity of recovering his loss all to a certain moderate sum, if you have no objection, said Belzors, we will leave off. I think I may with honour win as much as I intended to lose. Such

wisdom and disinterestedness raised in the company a buzz of approbation. Verglan alone was insensible of it, and said, as he rose from play, with an air of disdain, it was not worth while to have sat so long at it.

Emilia had not a wink of sleep all night, so much was she agitated with what she had seen and heard. What a difference, said she, and by what capricious fatality do I dread to be undeceived? Is it not natural for the seduction to cease, when you are sure of being seduced? I admire one, and I love the other. Whence proceeds this misunderstanding between one's reason and one's heart, that makes us still fond of what we no longer esteem.

In the morning, according to custom, Emilia came to her mother's levee. What is the matter? said she to her daughter; methinks there is some alteration in you.—A very great one, Mamma, I assure you.—What, have not you slept well?—Not very well; she answered with a sigh.—Come, come, pluck up your spirits, and put on your good looks, for I intend to take a walk this afternoon in the Tuilleries; all the world is to be there. I have often been concerned to see the finest garden in the universe abandoned and neglected; and I am very glad to find that the mode recalls the company there again.

Verglan did not fail being there, and Madam Troëne took him into her set. The view of those delightful scenes had an air of enchantment. A thousand beauties, in all the parade of brilliant dress, sat round that spacious basin, decorated with all the art of refined sculpture, and the noble walk that terminates at this basin, was crowded with young nymphs, who by their charms, and their talents, attracted the eyes and desires of the beholders. Verglan was acquainted with them
all,

all, and gave a smile to one, to another a nod. That, said he, is Fatmé, nobody is so very tender, so loving as she is. Cleon and she live together in all the harmony of angels; he has made her in less than six months a present of a thousand crowns; they bill and coo like two doves. That there is the famous Corinna; her house is the temple of luxury, her suppers the most magnificent in all Paris, and she does the honours of them herself with the most enchanting grace. Do you see that fair modest looking beauty, who casts her eyes so languishingly around? She has now three gallants, each of which flatters himself to be the only happy man. 'Tis delightful to behold her amidst her adorers, how she distributes small favours, and tells them one after another, what fools she makes of his rivals. She is a perfect model of coquetry, and no body can possibly deceive with more art and address. She will go great lengths I promise you. I have already prognosticated it to her. What! you are then her confidant, said Madam Troëne.—O yes, they are all acquainted with me, and don't pretend to give themselves any airs, they know very well that I am not to be imposed upon. And pray, Belzors, said Madam Troëne to that prudent young man, who had but just joined them, are you likewise initiated in these mysteries?—Not I, Madam. I am willing to believe that it is all very amusing; but the greater the pleasure, so much the greater the danger. Madam Troëne took notice, that the ladies of modest reputation received with a cool reservedness, the familiar easy salutations of Verglan; whilst they answered the respectful one of Belzors with a look of esteem and friendship. She jested with Verglan on this distinction; only that her daughter might take notice of it. 'Tis very true,
Madam,

Madam, said he, they give themselves those airs of indifference in public, but in private they make me ample amends.

At her return with them, she received a visit from Eleonora, a young lady of exquisite beauty. Eleonora could not refrain talking of her misfortune in the loss of so estimable a husband; she spoke of it with so much delicacy, candour, and sensibility, that Madam Tröene, Emilia, and Belzors listened to her with tears in their eyes. To a young and handsome lady, said Verglan in his usual stile, the loss of a husband is of little signification, it being so easily repaired. It will be no such easy matter for me, replied the modest and tender Eleonora. A husband that honoured a wife of my age with his confidence and esteem, and whose condescending goodness never had the fears of jealousy, nor the indolence of possession, such husbands are not so easily replaced! I suppose, said Verglan, that he was very handsome!—No, Sir, his beauty was in his mind. Fine beauties, indeed, replied Verglan with a disdainful look, the beauties of the mind! no doubt then but he was young.—Far from it; he was at that age when one ought to have discretion, or never will have any.—Why then, if he was neither young nor handsome, I don't see what reason you can have to act the disconsolate. Believe me, Madam, esteem, trust, reliance are always at an amiable woman's command. The essential point is to be sorted according to age and figure, to join the loves and graces together; in short, to marry a pretty fellow, or to live single and enjoy your liberty. Your advice, Sir, to be sure, is mighty gallant, said Eleonora as she rose to take her leave, but unhappily you have ill-timed it. As soon as she is gone, now that is, said Verglan, what may be

be really stiled a handsome prude. Prudery, Sir, answered Madam Troëne, is an exaggeration of virtue and reason; and I see nothing in Eleonora, but what is easy and natural. For my part, said Belzors, she is in my eyes as respectable as she is beautiful. Respect, my good friend, respect her, answered Verglan with some warmth; what can hinder you? she alone has a right to be offended at it. A thought is just come into my head, said Madam Troëne, if any body can comfort Eleonora, it must be such a man as Belzors, and if I was a friend whom he would consult, I should advise him to think of her. You do me great honour, said Belzors blushing, but Eleonora deserves a heart that is free; and, alas! mine is not so. At this he retired, overwhelmed with what he took for his dismissal. For, said he, did she not point it out to me to make my addresses to Eleonora? Is not that telling me to have no thoughts of Emilia? How little does she know the situation of my heart! Verglan took it in the same light, seemed to compassionate his rival, and spoke of him as one of the honestest men in the world; what a pity it was, that he was so very heavy and dull! this is what they gain with their stupid notions of virtue! they grow tiresome and are turned off. Madam Troëne, without explaining her meaning, assured him, that she had not the least intention of disobliging a person for whom she had the highest regard.

Emilia all this while had a down-cast look, and her blushes discovered the disorder in her soul. Verglan took for granted, that her confusion proceeded from her joy; upon which presumption, he took his leave, and retired with a triumphant air, and next day he wrote her a note with the following contents.

“ You

‘ You must think me, charming Emilia, very
 ‘ romantic, to have for so long a time let my
 ‘ eyes only be the interpreters of my heart ! Don’t
 ‘ accuse me of an unjust suspicion ; I read the bot-
 ‘ tom of yours, and had I only had that to confi-
 ‘ der, I was pretty sure of my answer. But you
 ‘ depend on a mother, and mothers are sometimes
 ‘ capricious ; happily yours is fond of you, and
 ‘ her tenderness has guided her choice. Belzors’s
 ‘ dismissal is a plain proof that her resolution is
 ‘ fixed ; but your owning it ought to precede hers.
 ‘ I wait for it with the impatience of the most
 ‘ violent and most tender love.’

Emilia opened the note, without knowing from whom it came ; and was as much offended at it as she was surprised. She did not hesitate a moment to communicate it to her mother. I am obliged to you, said Madam Troëne, for this mark of your friendship ; and must return you confidence for confidence. Belzors has wrote to me ; here is his letter ; read it. Emilia obeyed and read.

‘ Madam, I reverence virtue ; I admire beauty,
 ‘ and I do justice to Eleonora. But has heaven be-
 ‘ stowed its favours on her alone ? and when I
 ‘ adore in your image the most charming of its
 ‘ works, am I in a condition to follow the advice
 ‘ you gave me ? I will not say how cruel it is ; my
 ‘ respect stifles my complaints. If I have not the
 ‘ happiness to have the name of your son, I have
 ‘ at least the sentiments of one, which are en-
 ‘ graved in my heart with characters indelible.’

Emilia could not finish but with the greatest emotion. Her mother pretended not to perceive it. Come, my dear, said she, ’tis my business to answer these rivals, but ’tis yours to dictate what I am to write.—Mine, Mama !—Whose else ? I am
 not

not the person they desire to marry. Is it my heart that I am to consult?—Ah, dear madam! have I any will but yours? And have not you a right to dispose of me?—All that, my dear child, is mighty well; but as your happiness is at stake, it is but just that you yourself should determine it. The young gentlemen are both of good families, their fortunes much the same; examine which of them is best qualified in your mind to answer the notion you have formed of a good husband; let us retain him, and dismiss the other. Emilia, penetrated with so much goodness, kissed her mother's hands, which she bathed with her tears. O fill the measure of your kindness, said she, in guiding the choice I am to make; the more important it is, the more I stand in need of your counsel. Which ever my mother names for my husband, will be dear to me; my heart dares answer for it.—No, my dear child, nobody loves out of mere duty, and you must know better than I, which of the two is most worthy of making you happy. If you should prove to be otherwise, I will share with you your misfortune, but I will not be the occasion of it. Come, give me pen and paper, and tell me what I am to write! Do but imagine poor Emilia's trouble and confusion, trembling by her good mother, one hand over her eyes, the other on her heart: she endeavoured in vain to obey; her voice expired on her lips.—Come, my dear, to which shall I write first? have done, or I shall be out of patience. To Verglan then if you please, said Emilia with a faltering accent.—To Verglan let it be. What am I to say?

‘ It is impossible, Sir, for a man attached as you are to the world to renounce it, and be confined to your family; my daughter has not wherewithal

‘ al to make you amends for the sacrifices that she
 ‘ will undoubtedly exact. Continue, Sir, to em-
 ‘ bellish that world for which you are so proper.’

—Is that all?—Yes, madam.—Now for Bel-
 zors: What am I to write to him? Emilia con-
 tinued to dictate with a little more resolution.

‘ Sir, to have thought you worthy of a lady
 ‘ equally virtuous and beautiful, was not forbid-
 ‘ ding you to make a choice which both pleases
 ‘ and honours me; it was rather encouraging
 ‘ you to it. Your modesty made you interpret
 ‘ my meaning wrong, and you have been unjust
 ‘ to yourself as well as to me. Haste then, and
 ‘ learn to judge better of the intentions of a good
 ‘ mother; my daughter’s heart is at my disposal,
 ‘ and there is nobody in the world that I esteem
 ‘ more than you.’

Let me embrace you, my dear child, said ma-
 dam Troène, throwing her arms about her neck,
 you complete the fond wishes of your mother,
 and have spoke the very dictates of my heart.

Belzors arrived speedily transported with joy;
 never was a marriage more happy nor more ap-
 proved of. Belzors’s fondness was divided between
 the mother and the daughter; and it was a doubt,
 in the world, which of the two he loved the most.



The SHEPHERDESS of the ALPS.

A MORAL TALE.

IN that part of the Alps, amidst the high moun-
 tains of Savoy, very near the road that leads
 from Briançon to Modena, is a lonely valley, whose
 solitary aspect instils into the minds of all that travel

vel through it, a sort of pleasing melancholy: three hills, in form of an amphitheatre, on which some shepherds huts are scattered at several distances, interspersed with clumps of lofty trees, streams tumbling down the mountains in cascades, and pastures ever green, compose the beautiful landscape of this rural scene.

Count Fonrose and his lady were returning from France to Italy, when their coach broke down, as they were passing through this valley; and, as the day was on the decline, they were obliged to seek for some place of cover, where to pass the night. Whilst they advanced towards one of the huts, they perceived a flock of sheep, drove by a shepherdess, whose walk and air filled them with astonishment. As they drew near, their ears were entertained with the sweet accents of her melodious voice, which the echoes repeated in plaintive sounds.

How beautiful's the setting sun!

Its daily course now almost run,

We can behold its charms;

More pleasing are its fainter rays,

Than when in full meridian blaze,

It dazzles whilst it warms.

Thus will it prove, said she, when, after a painful race, the wearied soul arrives at the wished for goal, and calmly drops into eternity, to renew its vigour in the pure source of immortality. But, alas! how distant is the prospect! how slowly life passes away! In saying these words, the shepherdess moved on; her head declined with a supineness in her attitude, which gave ease and dignity to her gait and mien.

Struck

Struck with amazement at what they saw, and more at what they had heard, the count and countess redoubled their steps to overtake her. But what was their surprize! when, under her coarse straw hat and mean apparel, they met with every beauty, every grace. Pray, child, said the countess, finding she endeavoured to shun them, be not alarmed; we are travellers that an accident obliges to ask for shelter, till morning, in one of yonder cabins; be so kind as to be our guide. I am very sorry, madam, answered the shepherdess, blushing, and casting down her eyes, that you will be but ill accommodated: these huts are the habitations of very poor people. You live there, I suppose, replied the countess; and surely I may put up with the inconveniences of one night, when you undergo them constantly. There is a wide difference, said the modest shepherdess; I am brought up to it. I cannot believe that, interrupted count Fonrose, not able to hide any longer his emotion; no, no, you was not formed for such hardships. Fortune is unjust, or how is it possible that so lovely a person should be reduced to live obscurely, in so low and ordinary a dress? Fortune, replied Adelaide (so was the shepherdess named) is not to be deemed unjust but when she deprives us of what she had given before; my condition has its sweets for one that knows no other state in life. Custom and example create wants for the wealthy which the poor are ignorant of. It may be so with those that are born in this solitude, said the count; but for you, charming unknown, you are not what you would seem to be; your air, your voice, your language, all betray your disguise. The few words you have said discover a noble soul, and a cultivated education. O! tell us, lovely creature, what cruel turn of fate

fate has lowered you to this condition? A man under misfortunes, replied Adelaide, has a thousand means to extricate himself; but a woman, in such a case, has no resource but in an honest servitude; and in the choice of one's masters, methinks 'tis best to prefer the good and virtuous. You are going to see mine, and you will be delighted with the innocence of their lives, and the candour and simplicity of their manners.

As she was still speaking, they arrived at the hut. It was divided off by a partition from the sheepfold, into which the shepherdes turned her flock, counting them o'er with the most serious attention, heedless of the strangers that beheld her with admiration. The old folks, such as represented Baucis and Philemon, received their guests with that honest simple courtesy which recalled the Golden Age. We have nothing to offer you, said the good woman, but clean straw for your bed, and a hearty welcome to such provisions as heaven affords us; milk, fruit, and oaten bread. In entering the cabin they were amazed to see the order and neatness that appeared every-where in so poor an habitation. Their table was a walnut plank, finely polished by frequent rubbing. Their earthen dishes and dairy pans shone with the nicest cleanliness; every thing presented the image of contented poverty, happy to have wherewithal to supply the real wants of nature. 'Tis our dear daughter, said the good old woman, that manages all our little affairs. At break of day, before she leads her flocks to the hills and dales, whilst they are nipping about our hut the sweet grass, still surcharged with the morning dew, she employs that time in putting every thing in the neat and orderly manner you see them placed.—What! said the countess, interrupting her,

her, is this shepherdes indeed your daughter? Would to heaven she was! replied the good creature; she is the daughter of my heart, and I have all a mother's fondness for her; but I am not so happy as to have brought such perfections into the world, nor are we worthy of such an honour.—Who is she, then? whence came she? what misfortune has reduced her to so low a station?—All that is a secret to us. Three years ago she came here, in the habit of a villager, and offered herself to tend our flock. She would have been welcome to share our little, without taking upon her that painful task; so much the sweetness of her person and behaviour engaged our hearts. We could not believe she was bred in a cottage. Our questions made her uneasy. We desisted from further enquiries, as they seemed to disturb her. As our knowledge of her good qualities increased, so did our respect. But the more we strove to shew her that respect, the more she humbled herself before us. No; never had any child for its happy parents a more tender care, a more constant regard. She cannot obey, because it is impossible for us to command; but she dives into our hearts, and prevents our wishes, when they are scarcely formed. She is an angel descended from heaven to be the comfort of our age. What is she doing now in the sheepfold? asked the countess—She milks the ewes and she-goats, fosters the young kids and lambs, and gives them fresh litter. The cheese she makes is thought delicious; no doubt for having been pressed by her neat hands. I carry it to market, and have not near enough to supply all that would be my customers. When the dear child is tending the sheep in the pastures, she employs herself in making works of plaited straw, which are admired

mired by every-body. I wish you were to see with what dexterity she interweaves the osier's plaint twigs, and mats the slender flexible rushes. There is nothing, let it appear ever so perfect, but what she can improve upon. You see, madam, continued the good old dame, in all about you the image of an easy contented life: it is she that has procured it, 'tis she, this angelic creature, whose only study is to make us happy. But is she happy, said the count?—She does all she can to make us believe so, replied the old pastor; but I have made my dame observe, that she oftentimes returns from the pastures with a dejected look, her eyes still moist with tears; but as soon as she sees us, she affects a smile. 'Tis easy to perceive that there is some gnawing grief, that preys upon her heart, the cause of which we dare not ask. And then, said his old goody, what concern does she not give me, when, in spite of all our entreaties, the dear, dear creature will, in the severest weather, lead abroad her bleating care! A thousand times I have requested her, in the most earnest manner, to let me now and then relieve her; but my requests have never been complied with. She rises with the sun, conducts the flock, and does not return till it sets; often shivering with cold. How is it possible, my dear parents, would she say, with all the tenderness of a loving child, how is it possible that I should consent to let you leave your fire-side to be exposed, at your age, to the inclemency of the seasons, which I, young as I am, can scarce support? at the same time she comes loaded with faggots, which she had gathered in the wood, and, when she sees that I am troubled at the fatigue she will undergo, Don't be uneasy, she says, my dear mother, exercise keeps me warm, and labour is fit

fit for my age. In short, my dear lady, she is as good as she is beautiful; my husband and I never speak of her but with tears of affection. What if you were to be deprived of her, said the countess? Why, answered the old shepherd, we should be deprived of all that is dear to us in this world: but if she is to be the happier for it, we should die content, and our misfortune would be our comfort. Oh! may kind heaven heap blessings on her head; there are none so great but what she deserves. I was in hopes her dear hands would have closed my eyes; but I love her much more than I do my life. Adelaide's coming put a stop to the conversation. In one hand she carried a pan of milk, and in the other a basket of fruit; and, after curt'ysing with a grace peculiar to herself, she set about the little household affairs, as if it was not in the least taken notice of. My dear child, said the countess, you give yourself a deal of trouble—Not at all, madam; I endeavour to fulfil the intention of these good people, whose servant I am, to treat you in the best manner with what their little can produce; but I am, afraid, continued she, whilst she was spreading a coarse table-cloth, as white as snow, that you will make but a sorry meal: the bread is brown, but very savoury, the eggs are new laid, the milk fresh drawn, and the fruit just gathered, such as the season affords. Diligence, attention, and modest deportment, in every minute duty of hospitality, were conspicuous in this wonderful shepherdes. After the frugal repast, count Fonrose and his amiable lady retired to rest, on the neat bed, tho' but of straw, which Adelaide had prepared for them. Is not our adventure surprising? Let us attempt, said they, to unravel the mystery of this pretended shepherdes, invite

invite her to accompany us, and make her happy if we can.

At break of day, one of the count's servants came to let his master know, that he might proceed on his journey as soon as his honour pleased, for the coach was securely repaired. It was ordered up immediately; but, before they left these honest folks, the countess desired a moment's conversation with the young person who stiled herself their servant. Adelaide came to receive her commands. Without desiring, said the countess, to penetrate into the secret of your birth, or into whatever is the cause of your distress; I feel that I am sensibly interested in all that concerns your welfare. 'Tis evident that your courage raises you above your misfortunes, and that you conform your behaviour suitable to your present circumstances. 'Tis true, your charms and your virtues render your condition low as it is respectable, but it is not a condition designed for you. It is in my power, amiable unknown, to alter it, as the count's intentions are quite agreeable to mine. We rank at Turin among the highest quality. I want a bosom-friend, and by what I have seen in you, I shall think myself possessed of an inestimable treasure, if you consent to be my friend and companion. Drive from your thoughts the least shadow of dependance; you were not formed for servitude: and, should my fond prejudice deceive me, I would much rather lift you above your birth, than leave you below it. In short, I seek a real friend, one that I can confide in; be not under any concern about these good old people; I shall make up their loss, at least so far as to enable them to pass the remainder of their days in ease and plenty; and from your hands they shall receive my constant bounty.

ty. The poor old folks, who were present, fell on their knees, and kissed the countess's hands; then turning to Adelaide, they conjured her, in the most pressing terms, to accept of the lady's generous proposal. We cannot, at our time of day, be far from the grave; and as it has been your constant study to render our life happy, so must our death leave you comfortless in this solitary place. The shepherdess, embracing them, and mixing her tears with theirs, returned a thousand thanks to their noble guests, with a sweetness that encreased her charms: I cannot, said she, accept of your favour; heaven has marked my destined lot, and I submit to it: but I shall always, with the most grateful heart, acknowledge your goodness; and the name of Fönrose will never be absent from my memory: the only thing I have to request of you is, to bury this adventure in eternal silence, and never to reveal the fate of an unknown person, who is determined to live and die in oblivion. The count and countess redoubled their solicitations, but all in vain; she was unmovable. The travellers parted from their virtuous hosts, and, with great reluctance, left the charming shepherdess in her retirement.

During their journey, their whole conversation was taken up with this strange adventure, which appeared to them like a romance. They arrived at Turin, their imagination full of it; and you may be sure the desired silence could not be observed. The charms and virtues of the unknown shepherdess were an inexhaustible source of reflections and conjectures. Young Fönrose, their only son, was often present at their conversations, and never let a single circumstance escape his memory. He was of that age when the imagination is most lively,

lively, and the heart most susceptible of receiving tender impressions; but was of the character of those who keep the feelings of their sensibility within themselves, and which are so much more violently agitated when they burst from their confinement, as they never had been weakened by any dissipation. All the wonders he heard related of the charms, virtues, and misfortune of the shepherdess of the valley of Savoy, raised in his soul the most passionate desire of seeing her; the object which his imagination has formed is ever in his mind. He compares it to all he sees, and all he sees is lost in the comparison. The more his impatience increased, the more he took care to disguise it. Turin became insupportable; the valley where the inestimable jewel was hid, was the loadstone that attracted his heart: 'tis there he places all his happiness; but how to get at it! If his designs are found out, what difficulties to surmount! His parents will never consent to the journey he intends; 'twill not be looked upon as the mere effects of curiosity, but deemed a youthful folly that might have bad consequences. And then the shepherdess may be alarmed at his presence, and shun his addresses; if it is discovered, he loses her for ever. After three months struggle, he determined to quit all for her alone, and, under the disguise of a shepherd, find her out in the lonely valley; and there remain till death, if he could not prevail upon her to leave it.

He disappeared. His father and mother missed him with great consternation, and waited his return with the utmost impatience. Their apprehensions increased every day, more and more; and, his absence continuing, the whole family was plunged in desolation. Their fruitless search

and enquiries completed their distress; till at last these tender unfortunate parents are reduced to lament the loss of their only child.

Whilst the afflicted family of Fonrose was in this dejection, the youth arrived in the valley which had been truly described, and, in the habit of a peasant, presented himself to some of the neighbouring cottagers, and offered his services. His ambition is satisfied: he is accepted of, and a flock is committed to his care. At first he only followed the sheep wherever they chose to feed; in hopes that chance would direct him to the same pastures where the solitary shepherdess led her flock. The unhappy, at sometimes, thought he, may listen to the voice of comfort. If it is an aversion to the world and the desire of a retired quiet life that retain her here, she will experience some tiresome tedious hours, when she will not be displeased to meet with a friendly intercourse; nor avoid a virtuous conversation. If I prove so happy as to make mine agreeable, I shall have great hopes of something more: if I gain her confidence, friendship will follow of course; and friendship in different sexes is nearly allied to love. Whilst he indulged himself with these pleasing reflections, his eyes wandering on the beautiful scenes of the valley, he heard at some distance the very voice whose melody he had been so often told of; which raised an emotion in his heart as great as if it had been an incident unexpected. She sung the following words:

Sweet solitude! to which I fly,
Of every bliss bereft;
There affliction's cup enjoy,
The only boon that's left.

These

These melancholy complaints pierced Fonrose's tender heart. Ah! whence this grief that consumes her! what pleasure to afford her comfort! He durst not as yet raise his hopes any higher. It might perhaps alarm her, if he yielded to his impatient longing to behold her: it was sufficient for the first time to have heard the sweetness of her voice. Next morning Fonrose went out to the pastures, and having observed which way the lovely shepherdess directed her flock, he sat himself at the foot of the rock, which the day before had echoed her moving sounds. Fonrose, with all the graces of outward form, possessed every talent and every endowment that the young nobility of Italy study to attain. He played upon the hautboy as well as *Besuzzi*, of whom he had learned; and who was at that time the delight of all courts in Europe. Adelaide, absorbed in melancholy, had not yet begun her melodious strains. The echoes were silent; when on a sudden that silence was interrupted by the sweet notes of Fonrose's hautboy. A harmony so uncommon filled her with amazement mixed with some emotion. Her ears had never there been struck before, but with the shrill squeak and buzzing hum of the rustick bagpipe: motionless, with deep attention, she cast her eyes around, to find out from whence proceeded such divine music. She perceived at some distance a young shepherd sitting in the cavity of a rock, at the foot of which his sheep were feeding. She drew somewhat nearer, that she might hear him play more distinctly. Behold, said she, the effects of instinct! the ear alone has given this shepherd all the finesses of that charming art! what purity in the notes! what variety in the modulations! what fire, what neatness in the execution! who then

shall say that taste is not the gift of nature? Adelaide, for the first time since her retirement, felt her grief in some measure suspended. Fonrose, who saw her approach nearer and sit down under a willow, to listen more conveniently, had given her no room to think that he had perceived her; he took the opportunity as soon as she retired, to calculate the pace of her flock, so as to meet her without affectation at the bottom of the hill, where the roads that led to their different huts crossed each other. He gave her a look in a seemingly careless manner, as if he was wholly taken up with the guidance of his sheep; but, ah! what beauties were gazed upon in that look! what eyes! what a mouth! what divine features! so moving in their languor, how ravishing would they appear if animated with love? affliction had added paleness, and faded, in some degree, the blooming carnation of her cheeks. But of all her charms none struck him with such admiration as did her elegant shape and air; her easy motion was that of a young cedar, whose straight and pliant stem gently yields to the soft impulse of the Zephyrs. The charming image which love engraves in his heart, takes up his thought, and fills his soul with unresisting passion. How faintly, said he, was she described? This lovely beauty is unknown to the world whose adoration she deserves; she that would grace a throne, lives under the thatch of a cottager, employed in the low occupation of tending the flocks! In what poor garments does she appear? But she embellishes every thing, and nothing can demean her. Was so delicate a frame made for such a laborious life? homely food, straw her bed! O heavens! she has the thorns; for whom do you preserve the roses? How blest shall I be if I succeed in
the

the attempt, and raise her from this abject state, so very unsuitable, so unbecoming such perfection. Sleep put a stop to these flattering ideas, but did not banish from him her lovely image. Adelaide felt herself somewhat touched with Fonrose's youth and comeliness: nor could she help reflecting on the capricious turns of fortune. For what ends, thought she, has nature endowed this young shepherd with such talents, and formed him with such graces? Alas! those gifts, happily useless in his condition of life, might prove the source of misery in a higher station. What is outward form? what is beauty? wretched as I am, is it for me to fix their value? This reflection embittered the little rising pleasure she had indulged. She reproached herself for having yielded to it, and resolved never to give way to it again. Next day, Fonrose imagined that she affected to avoid his coming near her, he was cast down at the very thought. Does she suspect my disguise? have I discovered myself? These uncertainties perplexed his mind; his hautboy was neglected. Adelaide was not so far distant, but she must have heard the sounds had he played upon it. She could not guess the meaning of its silence, and began to sing in her own melancholy strains:

Ye pretty birds! whose pensive notes
 My lamentations join,
 Ah! what avail your warbling throats!
 Can they sooth woes like mine!
 All seem around to share my grief,
 As if t' assuage my pain;
 But mine admits of no relief,
 And comfort speaks in vain.

Fonrose, moved to his inmost soul with her complainings so melodiously expressed, could not refrain from taking up his hautboy. She continued, and he accompanied her sweet voice. Never was an unison more harmonious. Is this an enchantment, said Adelaide? may I believe my senses! 'tis no mean shepherd, 'tis some supernatural being that I have been listening to? Nature may give a bent, but great masters and constant practice alone can raise to such perfection. As she was thus musing, the valley resounded with a rural, or rather divine symphony. Adelaide imagined she saw realized those prodigies which poetry attributes to musick her brilliant sister. Astonished, confused, she could not determine whether to approach or retire; mean while, the young shepherd was collecting his flock to lead it back to the cottage. He is not conscious, said she, of the pleasure he communicates around, nor is he in the least vain of his perfection; he does not expect the praises I owe, which are so justly his due. Such are the sweets of musick; it is the only talent that finds enjoyment in itself, all others must have witnesses or else partakers. Musick was a gift from heaven, bestowed on man in his state of innocence; 'tis the purest of all pleasures; and the only one that I can yield to. I look upon this shepherd as an echo that comes to repeat my grief.

Fonrose, in his turn, affected to avoid her. Adelaide was concerned at it. Alas! said she, I gave myself up too easily to the little comfort I felt; I am deprived of it for my punishment. One day, as they met as if by chance, Shepherd, said she, do you lead your flock to any great distance? These words uttered from her sweet lips, caused in Fonrose's heart such an emotion, as almost

almost deprived him of his voice. I cannot tell, replied he, with hesitation; it is not. I that lead my sheep, 'tis my sheep that lead me; they are better acquainted than I am with these pastures; and I let them range wherever they please to go. From whence came you? said Adelaide.—I was born on the other side of the Alps.—And were you brought up to a shepherd's life?—No doubt, since I am one, I was destined for it.—That is what I can scarce believe, she replied, gazing on him with fixt attention; your talents, your language, your air, all convince me to the contrary. You are very good, answered Fonrose; but does it become you to tax nature of bestowing her favours with a sparing hand on those of our condition; you, whom she has formed rather for a queen than a shepherdess. Adelaide blushed, and waving the discourse, The other day, said she, your hautboy accompanied my voice with such masterly arts, as must seem a prodigy in one brought up to feed the flocks. 'Tis your singing, replied Fonrose, that is a real one in a simple shepherdess.—What, were you never instructed?—Like you I have no other guide but my heart and my ear. You sang, I was moved. What my heart feels, my instrument expresses; I breathe into it my very soul, that is all the secret; nothing is more natural. This is incredible, said Adelaide. I thought so too, replied he, whilst I listened to your voice; and now I am convinced of it, though sometimes nature and love will frolicksomenly bestow their choicest favours on the meanest objects; to shew that there is no condition, be it ever so low, but what they can ennoble. Whilst they thus discoursed advancing in the valley, Fonrose, animated by a small ray of hope, began to make it resound with the rapturous notes that pleasure

inspires. Ah! cease, cried Adelaide, spare me the image of a sentiment I never more shall taste! this solitude is consecrated to grief. These echoes are unused to repeat the accents of joy; all here join with my lamentations. I am not without woes, said the young shepherd, fetching a deep sigh, which was followed by a pause of silence.—What has caused your afflictions? of what do you complain? is it of mankind? is it of fate?—I really cannot tell. All that I know is, that I am very far from being happy; pray enquire no further into my situation. Hear me, said Adelaide, heaven has made us acquainted, to be a mutual support to each other's woes: mine are a burthen under which my heart sinks down even to despondency. Whoever you be, if you are unhappy, you are compassionate. I believe you worthy of the confidence I shall repose in you; but you must promise me that that confidence shall be reciprocal. Alas! said Fonrose, my woes are of a nature perhaps never to be relieved. Meet me to-morrow, said Adelaide, at the foot of this hill, under the spreading oak where you heard me moan, I shall there reveal what will excite your pity. They parted. Fonrose passed the night with great inquietude. His fate depended on what he was to hear. He dreaded the discovery of a tender unhappy passion. If she loves, I am undone.

He set out betimes to the rendezvous, and the fair shepherdess arrived soon after. The morn was overcast with clouds, as if nature presaged their sorrowful conversation. They seated themselves under the oak; when, after a profound sigh, Adelaide thus began the story of her woes.

Beneath those stones you see there, almost covered with the creeping grass, lie the remains of the
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the most faithful and virtuous of men ; whom my love and imprudence brought to the grave. I was born in France, of a family of high distinction, and too wealthy, to my misfortune. Count Orestan conceived for me the most passionate, tender love, to which my heart corresponded with equal warmth. My parents objected to our union, and refused their consent. Hurried on by my passion, I agreed to a private marriage, sacred to virtuous souls, but disapproved of by the laws. Italy was then the theatre of the war. My husband was ordered to join the corps he was to command ; and I went with him as far as Briançon ; there my foolish fondness prevailed upon him to stay with me two days, which he passed with extreme reluctance. I sacrifice, said he, my duty for you. But what had I not sacrificed for him ? In short, I exacted it. He afterwards set out with a foreboding that terrified me. I accompanied him to this valley, where we took leave of each other, and I returned to Briançon. In a few days, the report of a battle was spread about. I was not sure that my dear Orestan was there ; I wished it for his honour, I feared it for my love, when I received a letter from him, which afforded me great comfort. It informed me, that such a day, and at such an hour, I should find him in the valley, under the same oak where we had bid farewell ; that he should be there alone, and desired to meet me unaccompanied ; adding, that he only lived for me. Alas ! how inconsiderate I was ! I saw nothing in his letter but his impatience to see me ; and that impatience was to me very flattering. I was exact to the appointment. My Orestan received me in the most tender manner, Ah ! my dear Adelaide, said he, you would have it so ; I have failed in my duty

at the most important crisis of my life. What I feared, is come to pass. The battle was given. My regiment charged, performed wonders of valour, and I was not at its head. I am dishonoured; for ever lost, without resource. I have but one sacrifice more to make you, which I am come to consummate. At these words I pressed my dear husband in my arms; I felt the blood congeal in my shivering heart; I fainted dead away. He took that opportunity to perpetrate his design; and I was recalled to life by the report of the fatal pistol that gave him his death. How can I paint the cruel situation in which I was left? it cannot be described. These tears that must for ever flow, these sighs which suffocate my voice, give but a faint idea of my distress. I passed the night over the bloody corpse, quite stupified with grief. My first thoughts were, as soon as I was able, to bury it and my shame together: these hands dug his grave. I don't mean to move your compassionate heart; but the moment in which the earth was to separate me from the dear remains, was a thousand times more dreadful than can be that which will divide this body from my soul, Depressed with grief, deprived of food, my feeble hands were two days employed in performing this last sad duty; and I then formed a determined resolution to remain in this solitude till death re-united us. Gnawing hunger preyed upon my vitals, and I thought myself criminal in preventing nature from supporting a life more insupportable to me than death. I changed my dress for this of a simple shepherdess, and I look upon this valley as my only asylum. Ever since, I have had no other comfort but that of weeping over this grave, which soon I hope will be my own. You see with what
sincerity

sincerity I open to you my inmost soul. Henceforth I may weep in your presence without constraint ; a relief my over-burthened heart is much in need of. I expect that you will put the same confidence in me as that I have reposed in you : don't imagine that I am imposed upon ; I am certain that you are no more a shepherd than I a shepherdess. You are young, perhaps in love ; for if I guess aright, our misfortunes flow from the same source. The similitude of our condition will make us feel the more for each other. I look upon you as one whom heaven, moved with my afflictions, has sent into this solitude to save me from despair. Look upon me as a sincere friend capable of giving, if not satisfactory advice, at least a firm example of true resignation to the divine will. Ah ! madam, said Fonrose, overwhelmed with what he heard, whatever tender sensibility you think my heart is prone to feel, you are far from imagining with what deep concern the recital of your woes has affected me : the impression will remain as long as life. Ah ! why must I have a secret, nay even a thought, reserved from you ? from you that have a right, after what you have entrusted me with, to scrutinize my very soul. But as I told you before, and as my foreboding heart apprehended, such is the nature of my woes, that I am doomed to conceal them in eternal silence : be not offended, charming friend, at a silence which is my greatest torment. You are very unhappy, but I am more unhappy still. I'll be your constant companion ; I'll endeavour to mitigate your sorrows, and help to ease you in an employment too laborious for your delicate frame. Let me be the partaker of your grief ; and when I behold you weeping o'er that tomb, I shall mix my tears with

with yours : you never will have cause to repent having deposited your secret in an unfortunate heart that feels all the value of its trust. I do repent it already, said Adelaide with some confusion, and retired without further discourse. In her abrupt departure, she saw in Fonrose's countenance all the marks of an afflicted mind. Alas ! said she, I have renewed his sufferings ; and oh ! what sufferings must they be that can give him grounds to think himself more unhappy than I am !

From that day forth, farewell song, farewell hautboy ! No more musick, no more conversation. They neither seemed to seek nor shun each other. Looks that spoke their thoughts was all their language ; it was very expressive. When he found her weeping over her husband's grave, he beheld her in mute attention, full of jealousy, grief, and pity, till her groans were echoed by his.

A few days were past in this painful conflict, when Adelaide took notice how the youth wasted away ; fading like a blooming flower just blasted by some malignant planet. The grief that consumed him gave her so much more concern, as not being entrusted with what occasioned his trouble, it was out of her power to administer any comfort. She little knew that she was the cause of his distress. It is an observation founded in nature, that when the soul admits of two passions, they will of course weaken each other. Adelaide's regrets for the loss of Orestan, grew less in proportion as her pity increased for the young shepherd. She was very sure that her pity proceeded from no motive but what the most innocent friendship suggested ; nor did it ever occur not to give way to it : on the contrary, she indulged it ; for seeing
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the youth plunged in so settled a melancholy, she thought it incumbent on her, after what she had profest for him, not to leave him any longer to himself. Unhappy youth! she said, the first time they met after her resolve, you perish daily, and give me the fruitless concern of beholding you consume away, and not be able to afford you any comfort. If the recital of my imprudent conduct has not altered your opinion of me, if the sincerest friendship is dear to you, in short, if you will not make me more unhappy still than I was before our acquaintance, tell me, I conjure you, tell me the cause of your affliction. Was your secret yet more important than mine, you need not apprehend that I shall ever divulge it. Orestes's death is an eternal barrier betwixt the world and me. The secret of your woes which I desired to know, was for your sake, not for mine; it would have been deposited in my husband's tomb, with his faithful widow and your sincere friend. I hope, said Fonrose, it will be my fate to die first. Ah! madam, let me end my deplorable life, without leaving you to reproach yourself with having shortened it. O! heavens! she cried, what I? Can I have contributed to encrease the woes under which you perish? Ease my tortured heart, and tell me what I have said? What have I done to aggravate your afflictions? Speak, I say; you have revealed too much to hide yourself any longer: I do insist upon knowing who you are.— Since then you will force from me so peremptorily the fatal secret, know that I am * * * * that I am Fonrose, the son of those you lately filled with admiration and respect. All that I heard them relate of your virtue and your charms, inspired me with the rash design of seeing you under this disguise. I have seen you, and my fate is fixed.

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I have left my family in the deepest distress : they think that I am lost for ever, they lament my death. I know what is your attachment here ; and I have no other hope but to die adoring you. Forbear to give me any useless advice ; my resolution is as unmoveable as your own : if by betraying my confidence you divulge my secret, you will only disturb the last ebbs of my declining life, and will have to impute to yourself a blame, which you never shall have cause to impute to me.

Adelaide, astonished at what she had heard, endeavoured to sooth young Fonrose's despair. I will restore him, said she, to his afflicted parents, and save their only hope from death : heaven has procured me this opportunity to acknowledge their goodness. Wherefore, far from affecting an ill-timed rigour, she employed every means the most insinuating friend could suggest to calm and comfort him. Sweet angel, cried Fonrose, I see with what reluctance you are forced to make any one wretched. Your heart is devoted to him who lies in that tomb ; no power on earth can draw it away. I see with what kind condescension your virtue attempts to veil your unhappiness ; I feel your goodness in its full extent ; I sink under it ; and I forgive you. Your duty is never to love me ; and mine is to adore you for ever.

Adelaide, impatient to put in execution the design she had formed, arrived at the hut. Father, said she, to the old pastor, do you think yourself able to undertake a journey to Turin ? I want a person that I can rely on, to give the count and countess of Fonrose intelligence of what concerns their whole happiness. My zeal, said the old man, to serve them, will give me strength equal
to

to my inclination. Go then, continued she, you will find them lamenting the death of their only child. Inform them that he is living ; and that it is their poor Adelaide that will restore him to their arms. But at the same time tell them, that there is an indispensable necessity of their coming in person to fetch him.

He set out directly, and arrived at the count's house in Turin. He sent in word, that the old man of the valley of Savoy was come to wait on them. Ah ! cried the countess, perhaps some misfortune has befallen our lovely shepherdes ! Bid the old man enter, said the count ; let us hope for the best : who knows but Adelaide consents to come and live with us ? It would be, replied the countess, the only comfort I can taste after the loss of my son. The old man is introduced ; he embraces their knees ; they raise him to their arms. You weep, said he, the death of your son, and I am come to inform you that he is alive. 'Tis our dear child that has discovered him in the valley, and dispatched me to communicate to you this interesting news ; but she says, that you yourselves and only you can bring him back. Whilst he was speaking, the countess fainted away, overcome with surprize and joy. The count calls for assistance, she revives : they embrace the old shepherd by turns ; and acquaint the whole family with the subject of their transports. How shall we shew our gratitude ? said the countess ; how can we requite a benefaction that restores us to life ?

They set out immediately on the journey, and arrived with the greatest expedition. They left their equipage at some distance, and walked to the hut through the valley which contains all that is dear to them. Adelaide was tending her flock as usual. The old dame conducted them to the place
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where she was. How great their surprize ! when they beheld their beloved son with the fair shepherdess, under the habit of a simple pastor. Their hearts discovered him more than their eyes :— Ah ! cruel, cruel child, cried Fonrose's mother, throwing her arms about his neck, what troubles have you given us ? What could induce you to leave your affectionate parents ? What is your business here ?—To adore what you yourselves so much admired. Madam, said Adelaide, whilst Fonrose embraced his father's knees, you would not have been so long a prey to grief, had I discovered sooner your dear son. After the first effusions of nature were over, Fonrose relapsed into his melancholy. Come, said the countess, let us go and repose ourselves in the cabin ; and forget the woes this young madman has plunged us in. 'Tis very true, said Fonrose to his father, who led him by the hand ; what else but the deprivation of my reason could suspend the emotions of nature, and make me forget the most sacred of duties ? What but a madness ? You innocently gave rise to it, and I am severely punished for it. I love without hope, the most amiable and accomplished person in the world. You have seen but little of her ; you know but little of this incomparable lady. Honour, virtue, sensibility ! she unites all that is great and good. I doat upon her to idolatry : I cannot be happy without her, and she never can be mine. Has she trusted you, said the count, with the secret of her birth ? I have learned enough, replied Fonrose, to assure you, that it is not inferior to mine. She has renounced a considerable fortune in the world to remain hid in this solitude.—Do you know what motive has induced her to it ?—I do ; but 'tis a secret which she alone can reveal.—Is she married ?

ed?—No; she is a widow: but her heart is not the less engaged; nay, it is rather bound with stronger chains. Madam, said the count to Aide-laide, as soon as they entered the cabin, you see how you turn the heads as well as captivate the hearts of all that bear the name of Fonrose: nothing could have justified my son's extravagant passion, but so virtuous, so deserving an object. My wife's utmost wishes were to have you for a friend; my son cannot live without you for his wife; and it would be my greatest happiness to have you for my daughter. Oh! consider how many that love you must be wretched, if you refuse your consent. Ah! Sir, replied Adelaide, your goodness perplexes me. Lend me a while your attention, and judge of my situation. She then in presence of the old folks related her sad story, adding the name of her family, which the count was well acquainted with; and she finished her narration by taking him for witness of the inviolable fidelity she owed her husband. At these words a deep consternation appeared in all their looks; young Fonrose, bursting with grief, threw himself into a corner of the hut, to give a loose to his sorrows. His afflicted father lay down by him, and casting his eyes on Adelaide, Madam, said he, behold the effects of your resolution. The countess pressing her to her bosom, Ah! will you then, said she, give us cause to lament a second time the death of our dear child? Why did you restore him to us? The good old people penetrated with what they saw and heard, their eyes fixed on Adelaide, waited for her determination. Heaven knows, she said, I would willingly give up my life to acknowledge all this unbounded generosity. I own it would be the height of misery, if I had it to upbraid myself of having been the
cause

cause of yours. I leave the decision of our fate to your son; let me have a few minutes conversation with him. Then retiring by themselves, Fonrose, said she, you know what sacred ties bind me here; if I could cease to lament the loss of him who loved and doated on me even beyond discretion, I should be deservedly despised. Friendship, gratitude, and esteem, is all I have left to give; and is that a compensation for love? The more you have conceived for me, the more right you have to expect a suitable return; and what return can I make? The impossibility of performing that duty is the obstacle that prevents my making myself liable to it; nevertheless, I behold you all in a situation that would soften the most obdurate heart. Mine, alas! is but too sensible; I cannot bear the shocking thoughts of being the cause of your distress. How can I hear your generous worthy parents reproach me with their loss? I will therefore forget a while what I am, and leave you to be the arbiter of my destiny. 'Tis yours to decide, and chuse which is most agreeable to you, either to conquer your passion and strive to forget me, or take the hand of one, whose heart, possessed of another object, has nothing to bestow, as I told you before, but friendship and esteem; and what are they to satisfy a lover's ardent expectations? 'Tis enough, replied he tenderly; such exalted friendship equals love. I may, perhaps, be jealous of the tears I shall see you shed for a former husband, but the cause of my jealousy will only make you more estimable in my eyes and dearer to my soul.

She is mine, cried Fonrose, precipitating himself into his fond parents arms, she is mine: 'tis to the respect and gratitude she has for you that I owe my happiness; and that is owing you a second

cond being. Adelaide could not appeal from the sentence.

Did she consent merely through pity and gratitude? I will believe she did; she believed it herself; and I will not cease to admire her. Before she left the valley, she would revisit the tomb, which she quitted with regret. O my dear Orestan, she cried, if from the mansions of the dead you can have seen my struggles, and read the bottom of my heart, your shade will not murmur at the sacrifice I make to comfort a virtuous family: my love remains with you. I go to make others happy, without any hopes of being so myself. 'Twas with difficulty they got her away. She insisted to have a monument erected to the memory of her husband, and that the cabin of the good old couple, who were to accompany them to Turin, should be altered to a little neat country house, as plain as it would be solitary; where she intended to retire now and then, to lament the errors and misfortunes of her youth.

Time, and the assiduous care that Fonrose had in every respect for his dear Adelaide, joined to the sweet pledges, fruits of her second marriage, opened her heart to receive the impressions of a new inclination; and she is still quoted as a model of perfection, that claims admiration and respect even in her fidelity.



LUBIN and ANNETTA.

A TRUE STORY.

IF it is dangerous to let children know every thing, it is still more dangerous not to let them know

know any thing. There are, according to the laws established, several things that are looked upon as crimes, which are not beheld in that light by those of nature. You will see, in this true story, into what an abyss innocence may be plunged for want of knowing better.

Lubin and Annetta were the children of two sisters. Those near ties of consanguinity were incompatible, according to the rights of the church, with those of marriage. Lubin and Annetta had no notion of any rights or laws, but those of simple nature. They were but eight years old when they first began to feed their flocks along the verdant banks of the Seine. They were now entering into their sixteenth year; but their youth differed little from their childhood, except somewhat more lively in their natural friendship.

Annetta tucked up, without art, her fine dark hair under her neat straw hat; her charming blue eyes sparkled through the long lashes of their beautiful lids, and expressed with the most innocent simplicity all that an insipid coquette attempts in vain with dim ogles. Her rosy lips invited the kiss; her sun-burnt complexion was enlivened with the soft shade of purple that blooms upon the downy peach; all that modesty screened from open air surpassed the lily's whiteness. It seemed as if the head of a brown beauty was fixed on the neck of that of a fair one.

Lubin had a healthy open countenance, which bespoke a heart free and satisfied; his looks expressed desire, his smile was the image of pleasure, and when he laughed, he discovered a set of even teeth that shamed the ivory's hue; his ruddy cheeks called for the hand to pat them; add to all this a handsome prominent nose, a dimple in his chin, beautiful fair locks curled by the hands

hands of nature, a good shape, a free and easy gait, with the simplicity of the golden-age, that knows not what it is to suspect or blush. Such is the portrait of Annetta's cousin.

It is said, that philosophy approaches man to simple nature, so it often happens that instinct draws near to reason. You must not then be surprised if my young sheep-tenders should appear to have something of the philosopher; but I must tell you, at the same time, that if they do, it is without their knowing any thing of the matter.

As it was their constant practice to go to the great city to sell fruit, milk, and cheese, people took great pleasure in seeing them, and countenanced them in their little dealings; so that they had an opportunity of observing what passed in the world, and of giving each other an account of all they had remarked. They compared their own state of life to that of the most wealthy citizens, and concluded that they were in their poor hut much happier and wiser than them. Mad folks as they are, said Lubin, to shut themselves up in stone quarries during the finest seasons of the year. Are not you of my opinion, Annetta? don't you think our little cabbin much preferable to those magnificent prisons, which they call palaces? When the green foliage that covers our hut is scorched by the sun, the next thicket affords wherewithal to renew it; and in less than an hour, it is as pleasing and verdant as before. Light and air are ours at discretion; a branch or two less give a free passage to the cool breezes, a branch or two more keep us from the wet, and screens us from too hot weather; all that is not very expensive, is it, Annetta? No indeed, answered Annetta, and I cannot conceive why they do not all come by pairs during the fine season, and
live

live two and two in a little hut as we do. Did you take notice, Lubin, of their fine carpets of which they are so proud? are they to be compared to our velvet mossy beds! how sweetly do we sleep! how sweetly do we awake! but, Annetta, did you remark how they endeavoured to give their enclosures a rural air, by hiding the walls with creeping vines and such like shrubs. The landscapes which they attempt in vain to imitate, nature has formed for us; it is for us that the sun warms and enlivens it, and it is for us that the seasons vary as providence directs. Ah! Lubin, you are much in the right, said Annetta, for t'other day I carried some strawberries to a lady of quality, and they were making what you call musick for her; what a screeching it was! I thought within myself, why don't they come and hear how our nightingales warble their sweet notes! The unhappy lady for whom this noise was made, lay all along upon a kind of an open bed, with two or three steps of pillows under her head, and all the time that the fiddlers were scraping, she yawned and gaped to such a degree, that she set every body else a doing the same. I asked what was the matter with madam, and they told me she had got the vapours. Lubin, do you know what these same vapours are?—Not I, indeed; but I fancy it must be one of those disorders that are caught in town, which take away the use of one's limbs, especially those they call quality; and that is a very sad thing; don't you think so, Annetta? for now would not you be very angry if any thing hindred you from running after me on the lawn?—Very angry indeed, for I love to run, especially when I run after Lubin.

This was in some measure the philosophy of Lubin and Annetta. Free from pride, envy, and
ambi-

ambition, they passed their time without care and without trouble. During the warm season of the year they dwelt under a little verdant hut, the master-piece of Lubin's architecture. At evening it was their business to drive their flock back to the village, where the fatigue and pleasures of the day disposed them to a sweet and sound repose. The early morn called them out to their rural employment, which they obeyed with equal joy to accompany each other. Sleep only occupied a few hours of absence, as if to augment the pleasure of meeting again. But alas! so pure and perfect a happiness was not permanent. The genteel fine shape of Annetta grew insensibly thicker and rounder. She could not guess what was the cause of it; and Lubin knew as little about it as she did.

The bailiff or chief magistrate of their village was the first that perceived it. How do you do, Annetta?—said he one day to her: methinks you are grown fat of late! It is very true, Sir, answered the simple lass, making a low curtesey.—But, Annetta, by what accident has your pretty shape been spoiled? Have not you had some sweetheart?—Sweetheart! Sir, not that I know of.—Ah! my dear girl, nothing is more certain; you have listened to some of our young fellows.—To be sure I do listen to them when they talk; does that spoil one's shape?—No not that, but one of them has caressed you.—Caressed me? that's out of the question, for Lubin and I do nothing but caress one another from morning to night.—And so you have granted him every thing, have you not?—No doubt but I have; why Lubin and I cannot refuse one another any thing.—How! not refuse!—No, nothing at all; I should be very sorry if he reserved any thing from me,
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and much more so if he thought that I had any thing that was not his. Why, are not we cousins!—O! heavens, cousins!—Yes, first cousins I tell you.—Worse and worse, cry'd out the judge.—Do you imagine that if we had not been cousins, that we should pass as we do our lives together under the same hut? That young maids ought to be on their guard with young men; but I never heard that one should be in fear of a cousin. The magistrate continued to question her, and she answered with the same ingenuity; so that it was plain that in a very little time Annetta would be a mother. What be a mother! and not married! that was a riddle above Annetta's comprehension. The judge explained it to her. What, said he, the first time that this misfortune besel you did not the sun hide behind a cloud? Did not the earth tremble? No Sir, answered Annetta, it was a very sun-shiny day, and the earth, far from trembling, never looked more pleasant, nor more covered with sweet flowers.—And do you know what crime you have been guilty of?—I don't know what a crime is; but I assure you, whatever we have done was all merely out of friendship and good nature, without any malice. You say that I am with child; I should never have thought it; but, however, I am glad of it with all my heart; perhaps I may have a little Lubin.—No, replied the stern justice, you will bring forth a child that will have none that he can call father or mother; who will blush to have been born, and reproach you for having brought him into the world. What have you done, unhappy girl! what have you done? O how I pity you, how I pity the little innocent in your womb! These last words frightened Annetta; Lubin found her pale, trembling, and drowned in tears. O Lubin! said she,
with

with great consternation, do you know what we have done? I am with child.—You are with child! and by whom pray?—By you.—You are joking, for how can that be?—The judge has explained the whole matter to me.—Well, and how?—Why when we thought that we were only caressing one another as friends and cousins, we were acting like lovers and married folks. Aye! that is comical enough, said Lubin! and is that the way one comes into the world? but why do you weep, my dear Annetta, are you sorry for it?—To be sure I am; for the judge told me that I should have a child that must disown father and mother, and will be angry with us to have been born.—For what reason?—because that we are cousins, and have committed a crime. Lubin, do you know what they mean by a crime?—Yes; 'tis a vile thing; for example, 'tis a crime to take away any one's life; but I never heard that it was a crime to give life to any thing. The judge is an old fool, and knows nothing of the matter.—O! my dear Lubin, go to him, I desire you; I am still all of a trembling, he has put notions in my head that will embitter all the pleasure I have in loving you.

Lubin hastened to the magistrate. Pray, Mr. Judge, said he, tell me how you can make it out, that I am not to be the father of my own child, nor Annetta its mother? O thou wretch, answered the justice, how dar'st thou appear in my presence after having seduced a poor lost innocent creature?—Wretch in your teeth, replied Lubin, Annetta is neither seduced nor lost; for she is now waiting for me in our cabin. No, it is you, bad man as you are, to have told her Lord knows what that afflicts her; you ought to be ashamed of saying or doing any thing to vex Annetta.

Thou young wicked imp! hast thou the impudence to talk in this manner——thou that hast robbed her of what ought to have been dearer to her than life? —Of what have I robbed her?—Of her virtue and innocence.—I love her ten times more than myself; and if I have done her unwittingly any wrong, I am ready to redress it to the utmost of my power. Let us be married; what should hinder it? we neither of us desire better.—’Tis impossible!—And wherefore? the chief of the business is already done, since we are near being father and mother. And that’s your crime, exclaimed the judge; you must leave one another, be separated for ever.—Separated! O, Sir, how can you have the heart to mention such a thing? And who is to take care of Annetta and her child? I would sooner die than leave her. The laws oblige you to it, said the judge. A fig for your laws, replied Lubin, clapping on his hat; we have got a child without you and your laws, and please God we shall get others, and we will continue to love one another for all your laws.—O! the insolent varlet, that dares to fly in the face of the laws! O! the wicked man, the bad heart that would have me forsake Annetta! I will e’en go and find the parson of our parish, said he to himself; he is, no doubt, a pious and good Christian. The vicar was still more severe and inveterate than the justice, and Lubin left them, quite confounded to have offended Heaven without knowing it; for in short, said he, we have wronged nobody.

My dear Annetta, said Lubin when he came back, every body condemns us; but let them condemn, I never will forsake you. But I am with child, answered Annetta, hiding her face in her hands, which she wet with her tears, O! I

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am with child, and I cannot be your wife! O leave me! I am undone. I have no pleasure now in beholding you. Alas! I am ashamed of myself; and those blest moments which I was wont to pass with you, are now my confusion and reproach. Curse on that old judge, said Lubin; we were so happy had it not been for him!

From that time poor Annetta was in the utmost affliction; she could not bear the light, she wanted to hide herself. If Lubin attempted to give her comfort, it only encreased her grief; and she answered his caresses by pushing him away with horror and affright. What! my dear Annetta, said he, am I not your poor Lubin, whom once you so dearly loved?—Alas! no; you are no longer the same. I am all in a tremble whenever you come near me; the child that stirs within me, and which I should have been so glad to feel, seems already to complain of my having given him my cousin for a father. And will you then hate my child, said Lubin, sobbing?—O no; I shall love it with all my soul; nobody can hinder me from loving my child; I will suckle it with my milk, and, if it was necessary, with my very blood. But, alas! the child will hate its mother; the judge has said so. Let the old fool chatter away, said Lubin, pressing her to his breast; my dear Annetta, your child will love you, he must love you, for I am its father.

Lubin, almost distracted, tried all the eloquence of nature and love that he was master of, to dispel Annetta's grief and fear. Let us examine ourselves, said he; what have we done to make Heaven angry with us? We fed our sheep together in the same pastures; there can be no harm in that. I built a little hut, and you were delighted to repose in it; there is no harm in that. You

He slept on my knees, I respired your breath, and, not to lose any, I approached my lips softly to yours; there was no harm as yet; it is true, that sometimes awakened by my caresses——Alas! said she, sighing, could there be any harm in that?

In short, it was not possible for them to recollect any one thing that passed in their hut, but what was very natural and very innocent; nothing that any body could complain of, or offend Heaven. That is all we have done, said Lubin; where then is the crime? We are cousins, that's a misfortune; but if being related does not hinder one from loving, why should it hinder one from marrying? Shall I be less the father of my child, or you less the mother? Trust to me, my dear Annetta, and let them say what they will. You are your own mistress, and I am my own master; we belong to nobody, we can dispose of ourselves as we please; our property is our own. We shall have a child; so much the better. If it be a girl, she will be pretty and good-natured like her mother; if it should prove a boy, he will be joyous and sprightly, like his father. It will be a treasure for us both; we will strive who shall love it best, and, spite of all they say, it will know its father and mother by the tender care we will take of it. But it was in vain that Lubin exerted all that his reason and affection suggested to him. Annetta was inconsolable, and her uneasiness encreased every day more and more. She had not comprehended any thing of what the justice said; but that obscurity only made his threats and reproaches seem more terrible to her imagination.

Lubin, who perceived her consume away with grief, said to her one morning, My dear Annetta,
your

your affliction will be my death; rest satisfied I conjure you. Last night a thought came into my head that perhaps may succeed. The vicar told me that if we had been rich, things would not be half so bad; for with a great deal of money cousins might easily get out of trouble. Let us go to the lord of the manor; he is very rich, and not in the least proud; he is our common father, and a shepherd is as much his child as another man. I have heard them say in the village, that he looked upon them all as his children. We will relate to him our adventure, and beg of him to help us to repair the harm, if there be any. What, dare you? said the shepherdesse.—Why not, interrupted Lubin; the squire is all goodness, and we should be the first unhappy folks that he ever sent away without relief.

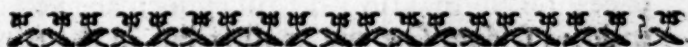
Lubin and Annetta set out then for the mansion-house. They desired to speak to his honour; they were bid to come in. Annetta with downcast eyes, and her hands across her round plump belly, made a modest curtesy. Lubin doffed his hat, and scraped his leg with all the simple graces of nature. An^d please your worship, said he, here is Annetta that is with child, and I am the very person that has done her that wrong. Our justice says that one ought to be married to get children; and I desire no better than to be married to her. But he says that is not possible, because that we are cousins. Now I think it is very possible, as Annetta is already with child; for I don't see why there should be more difficulty in being a husband than there is in being a father. The judge and vicar send us charitably to the devil; and we come to desire your protection. The worthy gentleman had much ado to keep his countenance whilst he listened to Lubin's harangue.

rangue. Children, said he, they are in the right, and you have done wrong; but don't be cast down, take courage, and relate to me all that has past. Annetta, who thought that Lubin's speech was not moving enough (for nature has taught the female sex the way to melt and gain the hearts of men, and Cicero would be but a school-boy in competition with a young and pretty sollicitress) Annetta, I say, took up the discourse. Alas! Sir, said she, nothing is more plain and natural than what has happened to us. Lubin and I have from our infancy fed the flocks together; we loved and caressed one another when children; and when one sees each other every day, one grows up insensibly without perceiving it. Our parents all died whilst we were very young, so that we were left to ourselves. If we don't love one another, thought I, who will love us? and Lubin thought so too. Leisure, conveniency, curiosity, or something I know not what, made us seek every method of shewing our love; and you see the consequence. If I have done an ill thing, I shall die with sorrow. All that I desire is, that I may bring forth my child to be a comfort to him when I am gone. Oh! Sir, said Lubin, bursting into tears, don't let Annetta die; for if she does I shall die also, and that would be a pity. If you but knew how we lived together! You should have seen us before that good for nothing old justice alarmed us! 'twas who should be merriest. Look at her at present, all pale and melancholy, she whose complexion could bid defiance to all the blooming beauties of the spring. What is still her greatest anxiety, they threaten her that her child will reproach her to have brought it into the world. At these words Annetta could no longer restrain her sobs and tears.

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It must then come and reproach me on my grave: All that I desire of Heaven is, but to suffer me to live long enough to suckle it; and then let me expire the moment it can do without its mother. So saying, she covered her face with her apron to hide and wipe the tears that streamed down her cheeks.

The good and virtuous gentleman whose relief they implored, had too tender a heart not to be touched at this moving scene. Go, my children, said he, your innocence and your love are equally to be admired and respected. If you were rich, you would have no difficulty to obtain permission to be united together. It is unjust that your misfortune should be deemed a crime. He was so good as to write to Rome for a dispensation in their favour; and pope Benedict XIV. consented with pleasure that these two lovers might be joined in holy matrimony.



The MARRIAGES of the SAMNITES.

An ancient ANECDOTE.

WHATEVER legislator thinks of securing the hearts of men, let him first of all lay his plan so as to gain the women over to side with the laws and morals of their country; let him put virtue and fame under the protection of beauty and the tutelage of love. If he does not succeed in that point, he can depend on nothing.

Such were the politics of the Samnites, that warlike republic, which subdued Rome, after having been a long time her rival. What was

it made a Samnite the warrior, the patriot, the man of try'd virtue? It was the care the state took to recompense these qualifications with the sweetest reward that love can give.

The ceremony of their marriages was celebrated every year in a spacious place destined for military exercises. All the young people, who were in a condition to give citizens to the republic, assembled together on that solemn anniversary. There the bachelors chose their wives according to the rank their virtues and their exploits had placed them in the records of their country. It is easy to conceive what a triumph it was for those virgins who had the honour to be chosen by the victors; and how much love and pride, those pangs of human passions, animated the heroes whose success depended on their exploits and their virtues. The ceremony of the marriages was waited for every year with a timorous impatience; for till that time the young men and young maidens seldom saw one another but in the temple, under the eyes of their mothers, and those of the sage antients, with a modesty equally inviolable in both sexes. It is true this constraint laid no confinement on their desires; their hearts and eyes were at liberty to make a choice; but it was a religious and sacred duty amongst the children of the Samnites, never to own their inclinations but to the authors of their being. A secret of that kind divulged, covered a whole family with shame. This intimate trust of the dearest sensations of the soul, this tender effusion of their desires, regrets, hopes and fears, which they were not permitted to deposit but in the revered bosom of nature, gave a title to fathers and mothers to be the friends, advisers, and comforters of their children. Renown for one part,
hap-

happiness for the whole, linked together the hearts of all the family with the most interesting bonds of human nature: and this intercourse of pains and pleasures, cemented by custom, and consecrated by duty, generally lasted to the grave. If success did not answer their wishes, an inclination that never had been published, gave up its object with so much less uneasiness, as it was in vain to pursue it; and that it must absolutely give place to a new choice: for marriage was an act of a citizen only. The legislator thought very prudently that he who would not have a wife of his own, reckoned upon those of others; and in making adultery a crime, he made marriage a duty. Wherefore they were obliged to appear at the assembly as soon as they had attained the age specified by the laws, and there make a choice according to their rank of choosing, even though it should be contrary to their particular way of thinking.

Amongst a warlike people, beauty, even in the softer sex, had somewhat of a noble but modest boldness, the result of their manners. Hunting was the most usual entertainment of the daughters of the Samnites. Their dexterity in drawing the bow, their swiftness in the race, are talents unknown to our age. Those exercises gave a surprising ease to their shape, and a graceful air to every action. When unarmed, modesty sat pictured on their form; no sooner was the quiver properly placed, but their head assumed a warlike attitude, and courage sparkled in their eyes. Beauty in the men was characterized by a majestic gloominess; and the image of combats always present gave their looks a haughty gravity, with an aspect stern and imposing. Amongst these warlike youths there was one distinguished

from the rest by the delicacy of his features, and the sweetness of his air; it was Agatis, son of brave Telespon, one of the old Samnites, who had been most remarkable in fighting for liberty. This brave man, whilst he was presenting his arms to his son, said to him, ' My dear child, I sometimes over-hear certain old folks (poor jesters indeed) say, that I ought to dress you in women's cloaths, for you would make a charming huntress. These foolish railleries afflict your father; but he comforts himself with the hopes that Nature has not made a mistake in forming your heart.' Never fear, my dear father, answered Agatis, fired with emulation, those old people may be glad some day to see their sons follow my example; it gives me very little concern that they look upon me as a girl: the Romans shall find that I am a man. Agatis kept his word, and in his first campaign gave such tokens of valour and intrepidity, that changed their railleries to the highest encomiums. His companions could not forbear shewing their surprize how that such a seeming effeminate body should be endued with such manly courage! Fatigue, hunger, cold, nothing checks his career; with what an indolent modest air he faces dangers and death!

One day, in presence of the enemy, Agatis beholding with great calmness a shower of darts falling round him, one of his companions, remarkable for his ugliness, said to him, How is it possible that you who are so handsome, can be so brave? Whilst he was speaking, the signal for the attack was given: And you, answered Agatis, that are not handsome, have you a mind to try which of us two shall bear off the standard of that corps we are going to charge? He said; they both rushed on the enemy, and in the midst of slaughter

slaughter and confusion, Agatis appeared with the standard in his hand.

Agatis now approached the time settled by the laws for him to be numbered amongst the married men, and by the qualification of being a father, obtain that of a citizen. The young maids, who heard the accounts of his valour, could not behold his person without emotion; they envied each other his looks, which were always attached on one alone; it was on the beautiful Cephalida. She reunited in the highest degree that modesty, that stateliness, those noble and attracting graces, all which characterised the beautiful Samnites. The laws, as I said before, had not prohibited the language of the eyes, which are very eloquent when love makes them the only organ of his expression. If you have ever seen two lovers constrained by the presence of a rigid witness, you must have admired with what rapidity the whole soul appears in one sudden flash emitted from a certain stolen glance of the eye! One single look of Agatis declared the situation of his mind, his desires, his hopes, his fears. Add to that the emulation of fame and virtue, with which love had enflamed his heart. Cephalida seemed to have forbid her eyes to meet with those of Agatis; but sometimes her eyes were a little negligent in obeying, and did not look down till after they had given their answer. One day which particularly decided the triumph of her lover, one day her eyes, that had been long fixed on him, remained for some time motionless, and then turned up to heaven with the most tender and ardent looks. I understand them, said Agatis to himself, yes, I understand your looks and your wishes, and I will accomplish their desires. O charming maid! they flatter me
beyond

beyond my expectation ; your eyes raised to Heaven were imploring its protection to make me worthy of the first choice ! your prayers are heard ; I feel it by the elevation of my soul. But, alas ! how many rivals prepare to dispute the prize. A courageous and brilliant action often depends on circumstances. If one more fortunate than I should happen to light upon them, he will have the honour to have the first choice ; and that first choice, charming Cephalida, will be your lot.

These ideas engrossed his mind ; nor was Cephalida's less taken up. She thought that if Agatis obtained the right of chusing first, he undoubtedly would chuse her. I dare believe it, said she, I have read it in his soul, his eyes are my instructors. If he presents himself to my companions, or if he talks to them, it is only with a polite indifference ; but with what sweet eagerness he appears at sight of me ! Nay, I even have remarked that his voice, naturally soft and tender, has still a more melodious sensibility when he addresses his discourse to me. But his eyes * * * * oh ! his eyes have said more to me than ever they did to any body else ; and would to Heaven they be the only eyes to distinguish me from the crowd ; yes, dear Agatis, it would be my greatest misfortune to appear handsome in any eyes but yours. Can there be any comparison made between you and the other young Samnites, whose very aspect is alarming ? Whenever they behold me, I am terrified with their slaughtering mien. Agatis is valiant without ferocity, amiable and tender under all the accoutrements of war. I know he will perform prodigies of valour ; but ah ! if fortune does not side with love ! if another
should

should gain the advantage *** the very thought chills me with affright.

Cephalida made no secret of her fears and alarms to her mother. O offer up, said she, your prayers to Heaven, and implore the gods in favour of Agatis; it will be in favour of your daughter. I believe, nay I am convinced, that he loves me; and is it possible not to return love for love? You know that he is esteemed by all our ancients, and liked by every Samnite maiden. I see their confusion, their blushes, their emotion whenever he approaches them; and their pride when he vouchsafes to speak. Mighty well, child, said her mother smiling, if he likes you, he will chuse you. — No doubt but he will, if he gains the preference; but my dear mother— But, my dear daughter, he will have his turn. His turn, alas! what signifies his turn? answered Cephalida, a little disconcerted— How is this, my dear? one would imagine by your discourse, that you fancy that every choice is fixed on you; you flatter yourself too much.— I don't indeed flatter myself, I am all apprehension; happy if I only appear agreeable in his eyes alone, whom I shall always love.

Agatis, the eve of the day that the campaign was to begin, said to his father whilst he embraced him, Adieu, dear author of my life; you see me for the last time, or you will see me return the bravest of the sons of the Samnites.— Well spoke, my child: it is thus a son who has a generous soul ought to take leave of his father. Methinks I see thee animated with more than common ardour; what favourable gods have inspired it? What gods; my father? Nature and Love! the desire of following your example, and of being worthy of Cephalida.— I understand, love then is of the party; there is no harm in that; but
tell

tell me, I think that I myself have sometimes distinguished Cephalida from among her companions.—O! Sir, she is easily distinguished.—Why really she is very beautiful.—Beautiful! she is as beautiful as Fame.—Methinks I behold her, continued the old man, who took delight in spurring him on, she has the shape and air of one of Diana's nymphs.—You do Diana's nymphs a great deal of honour.—An easy gait—and still more noble.—Such a fine complexion!—'tis the new blown rose;—her beautiful long hair so gracefully braided—and her eyes! my dear father, 'twas then you should have seen them, when after having fixed them on me, she turned them up to Heaven, as if imploring the gods to send me back victorious.—You are in the right, she is charming; but you must have many rivals.—Rivals, a thousand no doubt.—Some one may gain her from thee.—Gain her from me!—I am apprehensive of it; the sons of the Samnites are all valiant.—Valiant as much as you please: that gives me no apprehension. Let but an occasion offer to deserve Cephalida, and I warrant you shall here talk of your son. Telespon, who till then had amused himself in animating him, could refrain no longer from tears. Ah! what a noble present said he, whilst he pressed him in his arms, does Heaven make us when it bestows a tender heart? it is the fountain of all virtues. O, my son, you overwhelm me with joy. I have still blood enough in my old veins to make another campaign, and thou givest me a fore-taste of such actions, that I will be thy companion.

The day of the departure, the whole army filed off before the young maidens, who were ranged in order on the place to animate the warriors.

riors. The brave old Telespon walked side by side with his son. Oh, oh ! said the other old men, do but see if Telespon is not grown young again ; where is he going at this time of day ? To a wedding, said the good old man ; yes, to a wedding. Agatis made his father take notice of Cephalida, who rose above her companions with an angelic grace. Telespon observed his son as they passed her by. His sweet and serene countenance of a sudden glowed with a warlike ardour ; he looked as terrible as Mars himself. Courage, my boy, said he, it becomes thee to be in love.

Part of the campaign passed between the Romans and the Samnites in observing each other's motions, without coming to a decisive action. The chief forces of both states composed their armies ; and the generals, skilful on both sides, did not chuse to hazard their troops ; but the young Samnites who were to be married, burned with impatience to come to blows. I have done nothing, said one, as yet, that deserves to be inserted in the annals of the republic ; I shall have the confusion of hearing myself named without any distinguishing praise ! What a pity, said another, that they won't let us have an opportunity of signalizing ourselves ! I should have performed wonders this campaign. Our general, said most of them, has a mind to dishonour us in the eyes of our ancients, and of our spouses. If he leads us back without fighting, will it not give them room to conclude that he durst not trust to our valour ? but the prudent warrior who had the command, heard their discourses unmoved. He promised himself two advantages by his slowness and delays ; one was, by making the enemy believe that he was either weak or timorous, in order to induce them to attack him imprudently ;
the

the other was, to encrease the impatience of his soldiers, and raise their ardour to the highest pitch, before he risked a battle. They both succeeded. The Roman general, haranguing his troops, represented the Samnites as wavering and ready to run away. 'The genius of Rome,' said he, 'triumphs; that of our enemy droops, and can never resist our attack. Advance, brave Romans, if we have not the advantage of the ground, we have that of valour. March.' 'They come,' said the commander of the Samnites to his impatient youths, 'let them approach till within reach of our arrows, and then you shall have full liberty to deserve the objects of your desires.'

The Romans advance; the Samnites wait for them in a firm and resolute posture. 'Fall on,' cry'd the Roman chief, 'a body that is motionless can never support the impetuosity of a violent shock.' On a sudden the Samnites themselves spring forwards with the rapidity of a courser that starts from the barrier. The Romans stop; they receive their onset without being broke or shaken; their experienced general at once changes both the attack and the defence. They fought a long while with incredible obstinacy; to conceive it, you must call to your mind men whose only passions were love, nature, glory, liberty, and their country; all which interests combined, were fought for in those decisive moments. In one of these furious attacks of the Samnites, old Telespon was dangerously wounded, as he fought by his son's side; the youth, full of love for his father, and seeing the Romans broke, and flying on all sides, concluding the battle was gained, gave way to the unresisting impulse of nature, and having disengaged his father, helped

helped him to withdraw himself to a little distance from the field of battle. There, at the foot of a tree, whilst the tears trickled down his cheeks, he drew forth the dart that had pierced the good old venerable man. As he was binding up the wound, he heard the confused noise of a troop of Samnites that had been repulsed. 'Where are you going, my friends?' he cried, abandoning his father; 'O heavens! you fly. This is your way;' and perceiving the left wing of the Romans unsupported, 'Come along,' said he, 'let us attack their flank; follow me, and they are conquered.' This rapid and unexpected movement threw the alarm into the Roman army, and Agatis seeing that they were routed, 'Pursue, my friends,' said he, 'your advantage, the road is open. I leave you for a moment, and fly to my father's relief.' The battle was decided in favour of the Samnites; and the Romans, too much weakened by their losses, were obliged to retire within their walls.

Telephon had fainted away through excess of pain; his son's care revived him. 'Are they beat?' asked the old man. 'The victory is as good as gained;' replied Agatis, 'their defeat is certain.' 'If so,' said his father smiling, 'recall me if you can to life; it is welcome to the conquerors; and I will see thee married.' He had not strength to say more, for the loss of blood had reduced him almost to the last extremity.

After the victory, the Samnites were employed all night in assisting the wounded. They spared no pains to save the worthy father of Agatis; and he recovered, though but slowly, from the weak state to which he was reduced.

The end of the campaign was the time fixed for the marriages, for two reasons: one, that the
reward

reward for the services rendered their country should follow them close, as their example would have then still greater force: the other was, that during the winter, the young married people might have more time to give life to little citizens before they hazarded again their own. As the actions of these valorous youths had been more brilliant than ever, it was resolved to give more pomp and splendor to the ceremony which was to be their triumph.

There were few of the Samnite virgins that had not, as well as Cephalida, intelligence of the sentiments of some one young man; and each prayed in her heart for him whose choice she hoped to fix, if it was his fate to choose. The place where the assembly was to meet, was a vast amphitheatre, open on all sides by triumphant arches, where the spoils of the Romans hung suspended as trophies of their victories. The young warriors were to appear in armour; the young virgins with their bows and quivers, as well dressed as the simplicity of a republic permitted, where splendid superfluities were unknown. 'Come, daughters,' said their mothers, eager to adorn them, 'you must appear at this festival with whatever graces Heaven has been pleased to endow you. The glory of men is to conquer, that of a woman is to please. Happy they who shall deserve the good wishes of those young and valiant citizens, who shall be judged worthy of giving defenders to the state! The palm of merit shall shade their habitation; and the public esteem shall surround it; their children shall be the eldest sons of their country, and its most precious hopes.' Thus saying, the mothers interwove with myrtle and roses the beau-

beautiful locks of these young virgins, and gave the plaits of the veils the most favourable turns to suit the different characters of beauty. From the knot of their cestus, placed under their breast, fell down in waving folds an elegant drapery, which being clasped a little above one knee, gave their gait an easy and majestic air. They fastened their quivers to their shoulders, instructing them how to present themselves with a graceful appearance, leaning on their bows. This industrious care of the Samnite mothers was deemed an act of piety; and even gallantry itself, when employed for the triumph of virtue, assumed its sacred character. The young women looking at themselves in the pure crystal of a limpid stream, no one thought she was handsome enough, and exaggerating the beauties of her rivals, durst no longer depend upon her own.

But of all the wishes formed on that solemn day, none were more ardent than those of the charming Cephalida. ‘Grant heaven may hear your prayers!’ said her mother, embracing her; ‘but, my child, you should wait with humility and resignation the result of its will. If the gods have bestowed on you some charms, they know what their value is. It is yours to crown their gifts with a becoming modesty: without modesty, beauty may dazzle, but it will never move. It is the most attractive of graces, and almost forces veneration: Let then that amiable virtue serve as a veil to screen your hopes, which may, who knows, be extinguished before the setting of the sun, and give place to a new inclination.’ ‘Avert it, heaven!’ cried out Cephalida, unable to support such an idea without shedding tears. ‘Those tears,’ said her mother, ‘are unbecoming the daughter of a Samnite; do but
give

give yourself a moment's reflection; there is not one of these young heroes but who has ventured his life for our defence and our liberty; nor is there one of them but what deserves you, and to whom you ought to be proud of acquitting your country of the debt it owes them; let that be your meditation: dry up your tears, and follow me.'

On the other side, brave old Telespon conducted his son to the assembly. 'Well,' said he to him, 'how stands your heart? I was contented with your behaviour during the last campaign; and I flatter myself that it will be approved of.' 'Alas!' said the tender and modest Agatis, 'I had but a moment for myself. I might have done more, but you were wounded, and I owed you my first attention; I can't reproach myself to have sacrificed to you my honour; I should be inconsolable had I betrayed my country's cause; I should be equally inconsolable had I abandoned my father. Heaven be praised, my duties were not incompatible; the rest is in the hands of providence.' 'I can't but admire,' said the old man smiling, 'how very devout and resigned one is when labouring under apprehensions. Own that you had more resolution when you charged the Romans. Pluck up your courage, all will end well. I promise you that you shall have a pretty one.'

They repaired to the assembly, where the citizens of every stage of life, ranged in the amphitheatre, formed a most awful aspect. The whole terminated at the bottom in an oval circle. On one side were seen the daughters below their mothers; on the other, the fathers above their sons; at one end, the council of the an-

ancients; at the other, the young men who had not yet attained to the matrimonial time of life; all placed according to their different ages. Those that were last married the preceding years, surrounded the centre space. Silence and respect reigned throughout. That silence was suddenly interrupted by the sounds of warlike instruments, and immediately appeared the general of the Samnites, accompanied by the heroes that had fought under his command. His presence damped a little the looks of the competitors. He crossed over and placed himself, with his attendants, under the ancient sages.

The book where the annals of the republic are registered is opened; a herald reads aloud, according to the times, the attestation and decrees of the magistrates and generals relating to the conduct of the young warriors. Whoever, through cowardice, or any base action, had made his name opprobrious, was condemned by the laws to the infamous punishment of celibacy, till he had retrieved his honour in wiping off the stain by some glorious action. Indeed nothing was so rare as such examples. Probity and courage were the least praises you could bestow on the young Samnites. It was a sort of dishonour to have done only one's duty. Most of them had given proofs of a valour and virtue which any where else would have been deemed heroic, but which were scarce noticed amongst people who had every day such examples before their eyes. Some seemed to rise above their competitors by more shining actions; but the judgment of the spectators became less favourable according as they heard of virtues more worthy of praise; and those which at first gained their approbation, yielded of course to such as claimed their highest

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encomiums. The first campaigns of Agatis were of that first number; but when they came to relate his behaviour in this last battle, how he had abandoned a wounded father to run and rally the flying troops, and lead them back to victory! this sacrifice of nature to his country, united every voice in his favour. Tears fell from the old men's eyes, and those that were near Telephon embraced him for joy; they that were further off congratulated him with their looks; the good man smiled and wept; even his son's rivals beheld him with reverence, and every mother's wishes were, that their daughter might prove to be Agatis's choice. Cephalida, pale and trembling, durst not lift up her eyes; her heart, full of joy and fear, could scarcely beat; her mother, who supported her with her knees, durst not utter a word, for fear of betraying her secret: she fancied the eyes of the whole assembly were fixed on them. Soon as the murmur of universal applause was abated, the herald named Parmenion, and related how in this same last battle this young hero ran the hazard of his life to save that of his general; for seeing his wounded horse fall under him, and in that defenceless instant a Roman soldier, with his uplifted javelin, ready to pierce him, Parmenion precipitated himself over the body of his commander to intercept the fatal stroke, by which he received a dangerous wound. 'It is most true,' said the general; 'he served me for a shield, and if my life is of any use to my country, I owe that happiness to Parmenion.' At these words the assembly less moved, but not less surprised at Parmenion's virtue than at that of Agatis, gave him equal applause, and their votes seemed undetermined between the two competitors. The herald, by
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command of the ancients, imposed silence, and these venerable judges arose to deliberate together. The different opinions were for a while argued with equal force. Some said that Agatis ought not to have quitted his post, though to save his father's life; and that he only made an atonement for his fault, in leaving his father to rally his flying companions, and lead them back to the combat. But this sentiment, shocking to nature, was seconded only by a few. At last the oldest of the ancients got up and said, 'Is it not virtue that we are to reward? what have we then to do, but only to examine which of the two shews the greatest effort of virtue? He who from that motive abandons a dying father, or he who hazards his own life to save that of another? Both of these young heroes have been instrumental to our victory. It belongs to you, venerable citizens, to decide which of the two made the greatest sacrifice: Of two examples equally useful, that which cost the most, should be the most encouraged.'

Can it be believed, from the warlike genius of these people, that it was unanimously decided, that there was much more real virtue in tearing one's self from the arms of a dying father, which was in need of his assistance, than in exposing one's own life, even tho' death was unavoidable? All agreed to bestow the honour of the first choice on Agatis; but the struggle which ensues will seem to have less probability. The deliberation of the ancients was heard by every body; and Agatis observed, that it was from a principle of generosity that the balance turned in his favour. He knew there was another motive at the bottom of his heart; nor could he accept of the honour decreed him without an inward reproach. 'It is a sub-
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reption,' said he, ' I ought not to avail myself of it.' He desired to be heard; silence ensued.

" A triumph unmerited, said he, would be the
 " torment of my life, and even in the arms of
 " my virtuous spouse, my happiness would be
 " embittered by the thought of having obtained
 " her unjustly. You think you have crowned in
 " me the man that devoted himself the most in
 " his country's cause. Virtuous Samnites, you
 " have been deceived, for I must own that I was
 " not prompted by duty alone. I love, and my
 " ambition was to deserve the object of my wishes;
 " and if I have reaped any honour by a conduct
 " you are pleased to approve of, love is intitled
 " to it as much as virtue. Let my rival
 " examine himself, and if he has acted from a
 " more generous principle, I yield to him the
 " choice."

How extreme was the surprize which this confession raised in every breast! If on one side it tarnished the lustre of this young warrior's actions; on the other, it added to the character of his virtue somewhat more heroic, more astonishing, and more uncommon, than the most magnanimous sacrifice. Such an instance of truth and candour produced, in regard to these young heroes, two opposite effects. Some, with an open admiration, seemed to express, by a noble boldness, that this example raised them above themselves; others appeared dejected and confused, as if depressed by a load too heavy for their weakness to support. The mothers and daughters, in their hearts, gave the prize of virtue to him who had the generosity to declare that he was not worthy of it: And the ancients had their eyes fixed on Parmenion, who, with a sedate countenance, waited till he had leave to speak.

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“ I don’t know, said he, addressing himself to Agatis, I don’t know to what degree men’s actions ought to be disinterested to be deemed virtuous ; there is nothing, if we consider it right, but what we do for our own satisfaction ; but what I could not have done for mine, is the accusation you have made of yourself. If there be any thing in my behaviour more magnanimous than in yours, which is far from being decided, the severity with which you have judged yourself, raises you infinitely above me.”

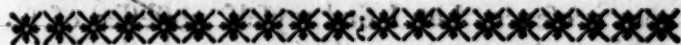
It was then that the ancients, more perplexed than ever, were undetermined which party to side with ; but there was no need of deliberating where to bestow the prize ; for it was decided, by an universal acclamation, that they both deserved it, and that the rank of the second choice was not worthy of either. The oldest of the judges then proposed his opinion ; ‘ Why do we retard, said he, by our irresolution, the happiness of these young people ? Their choice is already fixed in the bottom of their hearts. Let them be permitted to communicate to each other the secret of their wishes, and if the objects are different, each shall obtain, without priority, the spouse he likes ; but if it happens that they should be rivals, then chance must decide the preference. Is there a Samnite virgin but what ought to be proud of comforting the least happy of these two warriors ?’ Thus spoke the venerable Androgeus, and the whole assembly applauded.

Agatis and Parmenion then advanced into the middle of the space ; they began by embracing each other, and every spectator’s eye was moist with tears. Trembling and hesitating, they dare not name the object of their desires, for neither

thought it possible that any one could make any other choice but that which each of them had fixed on his heart. 'I love, said Parmenion, the most accomplished maid that heaven ever formed; she is all that is beautiful, all that is amiable!' 'Alas! replied Agatis, you love the very person I adore; there needs no name to the picture you have drawn; the harmony of her features, the sweet majesty of her looks, something inexpressibly divine in her shape and air, distinguish her from the rest of the Samnite virgins. How unhappy must one of us two be if reduced to another choice!' 'You are in the right, answered Parmenion, for there can be no happiness without Eliana.' ... 'Eliana, do you say? What, cried Agatis, is it Eliana, the daughter of wise Androgeus, that you love?' 'Who else could I love!' said Parmenion, surprised at his rival's joy. 'What, is it Eliana, and not Cephalida!' resumed Agatis, quite transported; 'ah! if it be so, we are both happy; let us embrace each other; you restore me to life.' It was judged by their embracing, that love had settled the dispute. The ancients ordered them to approach, and tell whether they had fixed on the same object; if not, to declare it aloud. At the names of Cephalida and Eliana, the whole amphitheatre rung with applause. Androgeus, Telephon, the brave Melantes, Parmenion's father, and the wife Eumenes, that of Cephalida, congratulated each with that melting tenderness which always accompanies the joy of old people. 'My friends,' said Telephon, 'we have indeed fine children; with what zeal will they not get others? When I think of it, I fancy myself again in the prime of life; laying aside all paternal weakness, the day of the marriages seems my own wedding-day: methinks

methinks that I espouse myself all the daughters of the republic.' So saying, he almost leaped for joy; and, as he was a widower, he was advised to put himself again on the list. 'None of your jests,' said he; 'if I was every day as young as I fancy myself now, I might still be talked of.'

They all repaired to the temple, to consecrate, at the foot of the altars, the ceremony of the marriages. Parmenion and Agatis were led home in triumph, and a solemn sacrifice was ordered as a thanksgiving to the gods, for having enriched the republic with two such virtuous citizens.



The CONNOISSEUR.

CELICOUR, at the age of fifteen, was looked upon, in the country where he was born, as a little prodigy. He composed the most agreeable love-verses imaginable; there was not a pretty woman in the neighbourhood that his muse had not celebrated; nor was there one but who thought that there was as much wit in his eyes as in his poems. What a pity such happy talents should be buried in a little country town! Paris was the only theatre worthy of their exhibition; so that his father resolved to send him there. This father was a mighty good sort of a man; he loved wit without having any, and admired upon trust every thing that came from the metropolis: nay, he had some literary correspondents there, among which was a *Connoisseur*, whose name was Fintac, and it was to him particularly that he recommended his son.

Fintac received the young man with a kind of patronising affability. I have heard you spoken

of, said he to Celicour, I know you have been admired in the country ; but I believe, my dear Sir, the arts and sciences are there, as yet, in their cradle. Wit and genius can produce nothing perfect, without taste; and taste is to be found no where but in Paris. Begin, then, by fancying yourself just come into the world, and endeavour to forget all that you have learned. What shall I not forget? answered Celicour, casting his eyes on a charming niece, of about eighteen, that the Connoisseur had with him. Yes, Sir, I already perceive that I now only begin to live. I can't tell what charm one breathes in your presence, but I find myself possessed of faculties unknown to me before; methinks I have acquired other senses and a new soul! Well said, cried out Fintac, this is enthusiasm! he is a poet; I'll warrant such by that stroke alone. There is no poetry in it at all, replied Celicour, 'tis pure simple nature.—So much the better, that is the true talent. At what age did you find yourself animated with these divine transports?—I had some little sparks in the country; but I never felt before the sudden and impetuous flame that elevates me this moment beyond myself. I see 'tis the air you breathe in Paris, said Fintac, that already takes effect. No, Sir, replied Celicour, 'tis the air which I respire in your house; I am in the temple of the Muses. The Connoisseur thought the young man of a promising genius.

Agatha, one of the prettiest, wittiest, sly little hussies that love ever tutored, lost not a word of the conversation; and now and then a certain stolen look, a certain half smile, gave Celicour room enough to think that she very well understood the double meaning of his answers. Your father, added the Connoisseur, is much to be com-

commended to have sent you into the world at that age, when nature is still tractable and pliant, to receive good impressions; but beware of those that are bad. You will find in Paris more false connoisseurs than true judges. Don't take advice indiscriminately; but trust to the decision of one, who never as yet has been mistaken in his judgment. Celicour, who did not conceive how any one could so bare-facedly praise himself, asked him, with great *naïveté*, where this infallible person was to be met with. 'Tis I myself, answered Fintac, with an imposing tone: I that have been conversant all my life with what is most refined in the arts, sciences, and *belles lettres*; I, that for these forty years have made it my study to distinguish, in works of taste and genius, the real and lasting beauties from those glittering flashes that die with the mode that produced them: I say it, because it is agreed on by every body; and there is no vanity in owning a fact that is known to all the world.

Extraordinary as this language was, Celicour gave it but little attention; his thoughts were taken up with a more interesting object; Agatha deigned now and then to rest her eyes upon him, and those eyes seemed to say the most obliging things in the world: But was it their natural vivacity, or were they only animated by the pleasure of their triumph? That was a point to be cleared; wherefore Celicour intreated the Connoisseur to grant him the permission to visit him: to which Fintac made answer, That he himself desired to see him whenever he thought proper to give him that pleasure.

The second visit that Celicour made, he was obliged to wait till the Connoisseur was visible; so that he passed a quarter of an hour *tête à tête*

with the charming niece. She made a thousand apologies, and he replied there was no occasion for any. My uncle, Sir, said Agatha, is delighted with you.—'Tis an advantage very flattering for me, but there is still another which would give me infinitely more pride and pleasure.—My uncle, says she, is sure you will succeed in any thing you undertake.—I wish he may be a prophet; and that you were of the same way of thinking.—I am very often of my uncle's opinion.—Be so good, then, as to help me, to deserve his favours.—I don't find that you want any assistance of mine.—Excuse me, Madam, I am well convinced that men of great genius have very often their oddities, and sometimes their foibles. Now to find out their weak side, to flatter their taste, their opinions; in short, they must be known they must be studied. Ah, charming Agatha! were you but inclined to serve me, how much is it in your power to shorten that study. And after all, what is it I request? To gain your uncle's protection; can any thing be more innocent?—What, is it the fashion then, in your country, to wheedle the niece, the better to cajole the uncle? Methinks 'tis no bad contrivance.—I see nothing in it out of the way.—But if it be true, Sir, as you say, that my uncle has his oddities, his foibles, would you have me expose them to you? Why not? Do you think I would make a wrong use of them?—Perhaps I don't; but then his niece.—Well, his niece; should not she desire to see every body strive to please him? Nobody mends at his time of day: there is nothing then to be done, but to manage and soothe him properly.—You are an excellent casuist; who can better raise one's scruples?—Ah! you would have no scruple did you but know me

me better : but no ; you are not sincere.—No, to be sure ; the thing speaks of itself ; this is the second time I have been in your company ; how is it possible that I can have any secrets reserved from you ?—I own my indiscretion, and ask your pardon.—’Tis I, Sir, that am to blame, in letting you take it in so grave a light. This is the fact ; my uncle is an honest good man, and would never have been any thing else, if it had not been put into his head that he was master of universal knowledge : ’twas his to be the judge of arts and letters, the guide, the appraiser, and arbiter of talents. All this wrongs nobody ; but it draws here a crowd of fools that my uncle protects, and with whom he shares the ridiculous title of *bel esprit*. I wish, for his own sake, that he could be persuaded to drop this chimera ; for it seems as if the publick had taken the resolution never to be of his opinion, which produces every day some new disagreeable scene.—I am sorry to hear it.—You are now as much instructed as myself in the secrets of our family. As she ended, Celicour was informed that the Connoisseur was visible.

The cabinet, into which he was shewn, pronounced on all sides a multiplicity of sciences and a crowd of knowledge. The floor was covered with folios heaped pell-mell on one another, rolls of prints, maps displayed, and manuscripts scattered about as chance had thrown them. On the table lay an open Tacitus, close by a sepulchral lamp surrounded with antique medals ; a little further were a mounted telescope, the sketch of a picture on the easle, the model of a *basso relievo* in wax, several scraps of natural history ; and from the uppermost shelf to the lowest, books tumbled on each other in a picturesque

manner. The young man hardly knew how to step along, whilst the Connoisseur could not refrain smiling at his embarrass. Pray excuse, said he, the litter you find me in; this is my study, and I continually want all these things ready at hand; but don't imagine that the same confusion reigns in my head: No; there every thing is in its due place, and, amidst such a quantity and variety of matter, all is methodical. That is surprizing, answered Celicour, that hardly knew what he was saying, so much his thoughts were still taken up with Agatha. O! very surprizing, resumed Fintac; and really sometimes I cannot myself but wonder how our ideas class and range themselves as soon as they are formed: one would think that there was a drawer for every species of knowledge. For example, amongst such a multitude of things that have passed through the circumnvolutions of my brain, who can explain to me how what I had formerly read concerning the return of the comet, should just at the nick of time find out its trace and occur to my memory; for you must know, that it was I that roused our astronmers.—You, Sir!—Yes: they did not so much as dream of it: and if it had not been for me, the comet would have passed over our horizon incognito. You may be sure I never boasted of it, but I tell it you as a friend.—And why do you let others run away with the honour of such an important piece of advice?—Dear me, I should never have done if I was to lay claim to all that the plagiaries have stolen from me. Depend upon it, my young friend, that in general there is not a solution, a discovery, a piece of poetry or eloquence, that strictly belongs so much as is imagined to the person to whom it is attributed. What then is the
object

object of a Connoisseur? 'tis to encourage talents, whilst he enlightens them. Whether the idea of this basso relievo, the disposition of that picture, the particular beauties or the all-together of such a play; whether or no, I say, they are the production of the artist or of me, it is equally the same for the progress of the art; that is my only motive and concern. They consult me, I tell them what I think, they listen to me and make their advantage: 'tis all I desire, and I am rewarded by their success.—Nothing can be more noble, answered Celicour; the arts must look on you as their Apollo. And pray does your niece vouchsafe to be their muse?—No; my niece is a young inconsiderate girl, that I fain would have educated to my mind; but she has no manner of taste for study; I once endeavoured to give her a relish for history: but she returned me my books, saying, that it was not worth while to spend so much time in reading, to find nothing in a succession of ages but illustrious madmen and bold-villains imposing upon a crowd of fools. I then had a mind to try what effect eloquence would have; she told me that Cicero, Demosthenes, &c. were no better than artful mountebanks; for when one had good reasons to give, there was no need of so many words. As for the moral part, she pretends to know it all by heart, and assert that old Lucas, her nurse's husband, was as wise as Socrates. Poetry, indeed, sometimes amuses her; but then she prefers little trifling fables to the most sublime poems, and tells you, with the greatest simplicity, that she would rather hear the chat of la Fontaine's animals than all the fine talk of the heroes of Homer and Virgil. In short, she is as much a child

at eighteen, as if she was but twelve years old; in the midst of the most serious and interesting conversation, you would be surprized to see her amuse herself with some bauble, and seem quite fatigued if you attempted to captivate her attention. Celicour could not forbear smiling, and took his leave of Fintac, who did him the favour to invite him to dinner for the next day.

Celicour was so delighted that he could hardly sleep for thinking that on the morrow he was to dine with Agatha. What a happiness! He came at the appointed time, and, by his comeliness, his youth, and the serenity of his countenance, one would have taken him for Apollo, had Fintac's Parnassus been better composed. But as he did not chuse to have any about him but flatterers and parasites, he never invited any other.

He presented Celicour to them as a young poet of rising merit, and placed him at table on his right; which was no sooner done, but all the eyes of envy were darted at him. Each of the guests fancied he usurped his seat, and resolved in the bottom of his heart to be revenged, in railing at the first work of his that should appear; and yet at the same time these gentlemen complimented and caressed Celicour, who on his side looked upon them as the most civil and well bred people in the world. A new-comer always excites emulation; the *belesprit* crowded all its sails, the republic of letters was cited to their tribunal, and, as it was but just to approve as well as condemn, they generously praised all the dead authors, and abused the living, excepting, as usual, those in company. All those new works which had succeeded, without having had a licence from Fintac, were sure to have but a momentary triumph; such as were stamped with the seal of his ap-

approbation, must undoubtedly be crowned with immortality, whatever was the decision of the present age. They ran over all the different sorts of literature; and, to give their erudition a greater scope, a question (to be sure quite new) was started, to wit, Which of the two, Corneille or Racine, ought to have the preference? No doubt but the arguments on all sides pro and con were exceeding judicious, when Agatha took it in her head, not having as yet uttered a single word, to ask which of two delicious fruits, the orange and the peach, had the most exquisite taste, and ought to be preferred? The uncle blushed for the simplicity of his niece; and the guests over-looked such a childish comparison. My dear, said Fintac, at your age you should learn to listen and be silent. Agatha, with a little sly almost imperceptible smile, looked at Celicour, who understood her very well, and returned a look which made her full amends for the little regard paid to her by the rest of the company. I forgot to observe that Celicour was placed at table just over against Agatha: and you may easily imagine he gave little attention to what was said on either side of him. But the Connoisseur, who now and then examined his looks, perceived in them a supernatural fire: Behold, said he to his learned brothers, how his genius bursts into being. Yes, answered one, just as the boiling water transpires through the pores of the *eolipile*. Fintac, squeezing Celicour by the hand, said to him, Now there is a simile for you; it is poetry and philosophy melted down together; 'tis thus that talents are amalgamated, and the muses go hand in hand. Own, continued he, that you never were entertained with such fare at your country dinners; and yet you have but a little fore-
taste

taste of what these gentlemen are capable of. There are certain days that their wit has no bounds. How is it possible, said one of the virtuosi, that we should want it, when we drink at the source. *Et purpureo bibimus ore nectar.* O *purpureo*, replied modestly Fintac, you do me a great deal of honour. Mind that, my young friend; learn to quote properly. The young friend was much more attentive to catch the motions of Agatha's eyes, who on her side was not displeased with those of his.

Dinner being over, they took a walk in the garden, where the Connoisseur had made a collection of all the rare plants that you see every where. Amongst other curiosities of vegetation, there was a most beautiful curled, striped cabbage, which was admired by all the naturalists: the diversified harmony of its colours, its pretty curls and foldings, were almost looked upon as a phenomenon. Shew me, said Fintac, any exotic plant that nature has taken care to form with greater delicacy: it was merely to give Europe its revenge in exposing the prejudices of certain *virtuosi*, who are curious of nothing but the produce of either Indies, that I have nurtured this beautiful cabbage.

Whilst most of the company were admiring this botanick wonder, Celicour and Agatha, who were strolling about, met as by chance in the next walk. Charming Agatha, said he, pointing out to her a new-blown rose, will you let that beautiful flower die on the tree?—Why, where else should it die?—Where I myself could wish to expire. Agatha blushed at this reply, and just in that moment her uncle and a couple of his brethren sat themselves down in a neighbouring

bouring arbour, where, without being seen, they overheard all that our young people were saying. If it be true, continued Celicour, that our souls pass from one being to another, I wish that mine after my death, might animate a rose like that : if a profane hand should offer to pluck me, I would hide myself amongst the thorns ; but if some charming nymph should happen to like me, I would incline to her soft touch ; I would unfold my bosom and exhale my sweets ; I would mix them with those of her breath : the desire of pleasing would add brightness to my colours.

—Mighty well, you make so many advances, that you would be gathered ; and what would be the consequence ? Neglected, fade, and die.—But Agatha, do you reckon as nothing the supreme happiness of a moment ? Then looking upon her languishingly, his eyes continued what his lips had begun. For my part, said Agatha, hiding as much as she could her emotion, if I had a choice to make, I should wish to be a dove ; it is all sweetness, all innocence.—Add to that, charming Agatha, all love and tenderness ; such a choice is worthy of you. The dove is the bird of Venus, and Venus would certainly distinguish you from the rest of the species ; you would be the chief ornament of her car. Cupid would repose on your wings, or rather he would nuzzle you in his bosom. From his divine lips your pretty bill should peck ambrosia, your—Hold, interrupted Agatha, you carry your fictions too far. One word more, said Celicour, a dove cannot live without a companion ; if it depended on you to choose, what soul would you give it ? That of a sincere friend, answered she ; at these words he gave her a look in which were pictured love, reproach, and grief.

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This is all vastly well, said Fintac, rising from his seat ; down right fine poetry. The image of the rose has a bloom worthy of *Vanbuysum's* pencil ; that of the dove may furnish *Boucher* for a charming, gallant, emblematical picture, *Ut pictura poësis*. Courage, young man, courage I say ; the allegory is very well supported : we shall make something of you. And as for you, niece, I was satisfied with your dialogue ; and here is Mr. Exergue, who was as much surprized at it as myself. It is certain, said Exergue, that there is in the young lady's dialect something very anacreontic ; it is an impression of her uncle's : every thing that he says bears the mark of the true fine antiquity. Mr. Lucid perceived in Celicour's fictions, the *molle atque facetum*. You must, resumed Fintac, finish this little scene ; it will do admirably well in verse. To finish it, answered Celicour, I must have recourse to Agatha. By all means, they said, and so left them together without constraint, that the speeches might be more natural and easy. I think, continued Celicour, that we left off at the dove, your companion : Ah ! beautiful Agatha, is your heart then only formed for friendship ? Is it for that alone that love has taken such pleasure to re-unite in you so many charms ? Methinks, replied Agatha, smiling, the dialogue is prettily renewed. I have nothing to do but to answer, and we shall make a long work on't. It is in your power, replied Celicour, to shorten it. Let us talk of something else, said she, interrupting him. How was you amused at dinner ?—I heard only one question, full of wit and good sense, which they had the imbecility to treat as a childish demand. I remember nothing more of their discourse ; my soul was not at my ear.—So much
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the better for you.—Better indeed! for it was in my eyes.—If I was less sincere, I might feign not to believe, or not to understand you; but I never feign at all. I think then it is very natural: I ask the *beaux esprits* pardon, that you should take more pleasure in seeing me than in hearing them; and I own to you, that I am not sorry to have a person to converse with, tho' it were only by the eyes, if it was but to rescue me from the horrid fatigue they put me to. And now that we have settled preliminaries, we have nothing to do but to divert ourselves at their expence; for, I assure you, that they are all of them originals in their kind. As for example, there is Mr. Lucid, who fancies he sees things that no one else ever saw. He would give you to understand, that nature had whispered her secret in his ear, which every body is not to be entrusted with. He chuses one of the company as a privileged confidant, which is generally the person of most distinction; he mysteriously leans towards him, and communicates his thoughts in a low voice. As for Mr. Exergue, he is one of the *litterati* of the first growth, despising in general all that is modern, and admiring only by the number of ages. He likes even that a young woman should have an air of antiquity, and he honours me with his attention, because he says that I have the profile of the empress *Popeia*. In the group of fools at the bottom of the walk don't you see a stiff, slender, finical thing? He composes little charming nothings, which are not however to be heard by every body. He fixes a day to read them, chuses his audience, and insists upon the door being shut against all profane intruders. He trips on tip-toe to the table, sets himself down before two wax lights, draws out mysteriously a
a pink.

a pink-coloured pocket-book, casts about him a gracious look, which imposes silence, and gives out that he is going to entertain them with a little romance of his own composing, which had the happiness of being approved of by people of the first consequence. He reads with great deliberation to be the better relished, and goes on to the end, without perceiving that every body was endeavouring to stifle a yawn. That other fighting creature you behold gesticulating close by him, puts me out of all patience. Wit is to him like a sneeze, that seems a coming and never comes. He would fain say pretty things, he has them at his tongue's end, but they escape the minute he wants to utter them: to be sure, he is much to be pitied. That other long dry figure you see stalking by himself, is one of the most abstruse and empty dreamers I know. Because he wears a bob-wig, and has got the vapours, he imagines himself to be an English philosopher. He pores over the wing of a fly; and is so dark in his ideas, that one is sometimes apt to fancy him profound.

Whilst Agatha thus ran on, exercising her little malice on these extraordinary characters, Celicour's eyes were fixed on hers: Ah! said he sighing, your uncle that pretends to know every thing, how little does he know the wit of his niece? He talks of you as a child.—It is very true, and his learned brethren look upon me in the same light. For which reason they don't in the least constrain themselves before me, so that their folly is displayed quite at ease; but don't you now go and betray me.—You need not fear; but, lovely Agatha, we must cement our intelligence by something more binding than
friend-

friendship. You do friendship an injustice, replied Agatha; there may be somewhat more agreeable, but nothing can be more solid.

They were interrupted by the Connoisseur, who, taking aside Celicour, asked whether the dialogue had been continued with the same spirit. It is not precisely the thing, said the young man, but I shall endeavour to supply what is wanting. I am sorry, replied Fintac, to have interrupted you, for nothing is so difficult as to catch again the thread of nature when once one lets it slip. I suppose that giddy girl did not properly seize your idea. She does indeed now and then shew some little sparks of genius, but they go out in a moment. I am in hopes that marriage will form and settle her. Have you any thoughts of disposing of her? said Celicour with a faltering voice. Yes, answered Fintac, and I depend upon you to celebrate the ceremony. You have seen Mr. Exergue; he is a man of the most consummate erudition. 'Tis to him I propose giving my niece, (had Fintac observed Celicour's countenance, he would have seen him turn pale at the news) a man of so much gravity and application as Exergue, continued he, has need of something light and chearful, to give him a little dissipation. He is rich, and has taken a fancy for the child, and is to be married to her in about a week; but he insists upon the utmost secrecy; so that my niece herself knows nothing of it as yet. As for you, my dear friend, I must initiate you into the mystery of an union which you are to sing; I expect of you an epithalamium on the occasion, *To Hymen*, &c. you understand me; 'tis a fine opportunity to signalize your genius——But, Sir,—Come, none of your modesty, 'tis the bane of talents.—I desire

fire to be excused.—I will admit of no excuse, you must undertake it; 'tis quite the thing for your manner, and will undoubtedly gain you great honour. My niece is young and handsome; animated by such a subject, with your wit and imagination, the verse will flow spontaneously. As for the husband, I told you he was one in ten thousand: there is not a greater proficient in the knowledge of antiques; he has a collection of medals which he values at forty thousand crowns. He was to have set out to see the ruins of Herculaneum, and I don't know what it was that prevented his undertaking a journey to Palmira. Now you perceive how many striking objects present themselves to a poetical eye. What need I mention it? I see that you are already inspired; I read in your countenance that profound meditation which broods upon the seeds of genius, and hastens them on to fecundity. Go, my dear friend, and seize the precious moments; whilst I return and plunge into the depth of literature.

Celicour, in the utmost consternation at what he heard, burned with impatience to see Agatha. Next day, under pretence of consulting the Connoisseur, and before he was introduced into the study, he desired to speak with his niece. Ah! charming Agatha, you see a wretch in despair! —Why, what's the matter?—I am undone for ever; you are to be married to Mr. Exergue.—Who has put that stuff into your head?—Why your uncle, Fintac, himself.—Really!—Yes, and has charged me to write your epithalamium.—Well, and won't it be a charming piece?—How can you jest? Does it excite your mirth to have Exergue for a husband? 'Twill be
a very

a very good farce, how can I forbear laughing? Oh! Agatha, this is no time for joking; think of my cruel situation; think of him who adores you, and must resign you for ever! Agatha interrupted him as he was falling at her knees: Own, said she, that these sort of incidents come very opportunely to favour a love-declaration; for as he that makes it is supposed to be in such distraction, that he knows not what he says, she that hears it, can't tell how to be offended; so that what with disorder on one side, what with reserve on the other, love boldly pursues its aim. But let us not be in such a hurry; compose yourself, and tell me where lies the grievance?—In your tranquil insensibility.—What! would you have me repine at a misfortune I defy?—Have I not already told you that your marriage with Exergue is determined? Pray, how can it be determined without my consent?—But if your uncle has given his word?—If he has given it, he must retract.—Oh! can you have the courage!—What do you mean? The courage not to say yes! A mighty great effort truly.—O I am transported with joy!—Your joy is as extravagant as your grief.—Why, you say you will not be united to Exergue.—Well, and what then?—You will then be mine.—And is there no medium?—What, whoever refuses his hand, must take up with yours? a pretty conclusion indeed! Upon my word, you talk like a country poet: go and wait upon my uncle, and don't let him perceive that you know any thing of the matter.

Well, how goes on the epithalamium? said the Connoisseur, meeting him half-way.—I have formed the whole plan in my head.—Let us hear.—I have taken the allegory of Time espousing

pausing Truth.—The notion is fine, but it is dull; and then, you know, Time is very old.—Mr. Exergue is an antiquarian.—That is true: but nobody likes to be told that he is as old as Time.—Would you rather I should fix upon the nuptials of Vulcan and Venus?—Aye, Vulcan! because of the medals and bronzes; but no; the adventure of Mars is ominous. If you will but think a little, you will find out some happier idea. But apropos of Vulcan, have you a mind to see this evening the essay of an artificer that I protect, who is to let off some Chinese rockets, of which I gave him the composition, and to which indeed I made an addition, for I must always put in something of my own? Celicour, who made no doubt but that Agatha would be of the party, accepted of the invitation with great pleasure.

The spectators had taken their places. Fintac and his niece occupied a window; there was a little space on one side of her, which had been managed as if without design; Celicour slipped into it not without a tremor, which tremor soon became an extacy of joy, in finding himself so close to Agatha. Fintac's eyes were wholly taken up in pursuing the flight of the rockets: those of Celicour were fixed on his niece. The stars themselves might have dropped from the firmament unnoticed by him. His hand just on the edge of the window, lit on a hand softer than the softest down. A trembling ensued, which Agatha could not help perceiving. The hand which he gently touched, made a motion as if to withdraw, and his made another to keep it where it was. Agatha turned her eyes to him, and met with his that seemed to ask pardon. She thought it would vex him if she took it away, so, out of weakness or pity, she left it motionless where it was. This was

was a great deal, but it was not enough ; Agatha's hand was shut, so that Celicour's could not grasp it. Love inspired him with the boldness to open it. What was his surprize and joy when he felt it yield insensibly to the sweet violence ? He holds Agatha's hand in his palm, which he amorously pressed. Can you conceive his felicity ? It is not yet compleat. The hand he squeezes makes no return ; he draws it towards him ; he ventures to lay it to his heart, which advanced to meet it. She attempts to take it away, he holds it fast where it was, and love alone can tell with what a palpitacion it bet under the timorous hand. 'Twas a loadstone for her. O triumph ! O extatic rapture ! 'Tis no longer Celicour that presses her, 'tis Agatha answers to his throbbing breast. Those that have never loved, can frame no idea of this emotion ; and those that have loved, have never felt it but once. Their looks were blended together with that moving languor, the sweetest of all expressions, when the chief piece of the fire-works was played off ; at which Agatha's hand pressed closer to Celicour's breast ; and whilst every body else was admiring the sparkling beauty of the rockets, our lovers, full only of themselves, expressed by their ardent sighs the regret they had to part. Such was this dumb scene, worthy to be quoted as an example of eloquent silence.

From that moment their hearts were connected, and they had no secrets reserved from each other. They both, for the first time, felt the pleasure of reciprocal love ; and that bloom of sensibility is the purest essence of the soul. But love, that suits itself to different characters, was grave and timorous in Celicour, merry, lively, and arch in Agatha.

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The day was come when she was to be informed of her marriage with Mr. Exergue. The antiquary waited upon her, found her alone, and made her a love-declaration grounded on her uncle's consent. I know very well, said she in a jocular manner, that you like me in profile; but I must have a husband that I like to look at in front; and to be plain, you are not the man for me. You have you say my uncle's consent; I wish you joy of it; but you cannot marry me without mine, and that, upon my honour, you never shall have. In vain Exergue vowed and protested, that she reunited in his eyes more charms than has the Venus of Medicis. Agatha wished him an antique Venus, assuring him that she had not the least bit of one in her composition. It is in your power, added she, to lay me under the necessity of displeasing my uncle, or to save me that vexation. I shall be obliged to you, if you will take upon you to break off this match, as it would give me much uneasiness to do it myself; and really, the most prudent thing one can do when one is not loved, is to endeavour not to be hated; and so, Sir, I am your most humble servant.

The antiquarian was horribly chagrined at Agatha's refusal. He would have dissembled it out of pride; but the reproach of not being so good as his word, forced him to own it. Fintac, whose authority and importance were called in question, was excessive angry at his niece's resistance; he did all that lay in his power to make her comply: but he could obtain no other answer than that she was not a medal; and he declared in his wrath, that she never should have any other husband. That was not the only obstacle to our young people's happiness. Celicour had but a small inheritance to expect, and Agatha had no fortune but
what

what her uncle would please to give her ; and he was less than ever disposed to strip himself for her of any part of his wealth. At another time, he would have taken care to provide for them ; but after Agatha's denial, nothing but a miracle could engage him to do it, which love undertook to perform.

Flatter my uncle, said Agatha to her lover, intoxicate him with praises, and be cautious not to let him perceive our intelligence. To compass this, let us avoid being seen together, and rest satisfied in letting me know now and then privately, how things go on. Fintac made no mystery to Celicour of his dissatisfaction with his niece's behaviour. Has she, do you think, said he, any secret inclination ? O if it was so—but no, she is a little thoughtless indolent creature, that neither feels nor loves any thing. If she reckons upon being my heiress, she will find herself vastly mistaken ; I know better where to place my bounty. Celicour, alarmed at Fintac's threats, watched an opportunity to inform Agatha of his apprehensions. She made a jest of them.—But, my dear Agatha, he is desperately angry with you.—That is no matter.—He says he will disinheret you.—Say as he says ; gain his friendship, and leave the rest to love and time. Celicour followed her advice. He flattered Fintac through thick and thin, and in every exaggerated applause, the Connoisseur discovered in the young man some new degree of merit. So much judgment, wit, and penetration, seldom meet in one of his age, said he to his brother Connoisseurs, he is a prodigy ! in short, the high opinion he had of him was such, that he thought he might intrust him with what he called the secret of his soul. It was a play of his own, which he had never read to any body, for fear of hazard-

hazarding his reputation. After having exacted the most inviolable secrecy, he appointed a private rendezvous to communicate it to him. Agatha was transported with joy at this news; O Celicour, nothing could be more fortunate, said she; go and put all your wits to work, and give a double dose of adulation. Let the play be good or bad, you must extol it as a master-piece! a nonpareil.

Fintac, tête-a-tête with Celicour, after having double-locked the door, took the precious manuscript out of a secret drawer of his bureau, and read with an enthusiastic voice the most insipid, dull comedy, that ever was penned. It was a cruel torment for Celicour to be obliged to commend such stuff: but Agatha had imposed it on him; he therefore went on applauding, and the Connoisseur was overjoyed. Own now, said he, after he had read it, that it is really a fine piece. —Very fine, indeed! —I must tell you then, why I have pitched upon you as my intimate friend and only confident. It has been my most ardent desire for some years to see this play appear upon the stage; but I have perhaps a too timorous over-niceness, and I don't chuse to give it under my own name, (Celicour shuddered at these words) I have been cautious not to let any body into my secret, but I think you worthy of this distinguished mark of my friendship. You shall offer my work as if it was your own; all that I desire is the pleasure of its success; I leave to you the profits and the honour. The very notion of imposing upon the publick was enough to alarm Celicour's delicacy; but to think of giving a miserable performance under his name, which must necessarily be hissed, gave him the greatest reluctance. He was quite confounded at the proposal; but, in spite of his disgust, he was obliged to comply. As I have
intrusted

intrusted you, and you alone, with my secret, said Fintac, you are bound in honour to grant me my request. It is of no moment to the publick, whether you or I are the author; this innocent untruth harms nobody. My play is my property. I make it over to you, and posterity, even to the latest ages, will never find it out: so that your scruples are guarded on every side. If after all, you refuse to own this work, I must believe that you think it a bad one; that you have deceived me in praising it; and, consequently, you are equally undeserving of my friendship and esteem. What would not Agatha's lover undertake, rather than incur her uncle's displeasure! He assured him that his reservedness proceeded from honourable motives, and desired he would wait till next day for his determination. O he has read it to me, said he to Agatha.—Well, and what then!—What then? Why, it is detestable.—I thought as much.—He insists on my bringing it on the stage as my own.—How is that?—Why, that he will have it pass for mine.—Ah, Celicour, heaven be praised for this lucky adventure! Have you agreed to his proposal?—No, not yet; but I am afraid I shall be forced to it.—So much the better.—But I tell you, that it is shockingly bad.—So much the better still.—It will be hissed.—Better and better I tell you; acquiesce in every thing he desires. It was a bitter potion; so what with anxiety, what with vexation, Celicour had not a wink of sleep. Next morning he went to Fintac, and told him that he had considered the affair, and that there was nothing he would not do, rather than forfeit his favour. It is not my desire, said the Connoisseur, that you should imprudently lay yourself open to the criticks; transcribe the play in your own hand-writing; you shall read it

as your own to our friends, who are all real judges; and if they don't pronounce its success infallible, you are under no restraint, and I leave you to act as you please. One thing though I must desire of you, which is, to peruse it over leisurely by yourself, that you may be master of the subject, and read it with greater spirit. This precaution gave Celicour some little hope. I am to read the play to his friends, said he to Agatha; if they don't approve of it, he dispenses with me giving it to the public.—They will applaud it, at least I hope so; if they condemn it, we are undone.—I don't understand you; explain your meaning?—Go, go to your rendezvous, we must not be seen together. What she foresaw, came to pass. The judges being all met, the Connoisseur recommended the play as a wonder, especially in so young a poet. The young poet read his best; and the audience, followed Fintac's example, applauded every sentence, were enraptured with each scene, and crowned the end with downright acclamations. They found in it the delicacy of Aristophanes, the elegance of Plautus, and the comic of Terence. They were at a loss to determine which of Moliere's plays might be put in competition with it. After this trial, there was no hesitation. The actors indeed differed in opinion from the Connoisseurs; but every body knows that those sort of folks are not famous for taste; they were ordered to act the play. Agatha, who was present at the reading, applauded with all her might; and in some of the pathetic scenes, she pretended to be very much moved; her seeming vehemence of applause almost reconciled her to her uncle. Is it possible, said Celicour, that you really like the play?—O vastly! 'tis an excellent one, at least an excellent one

one for us ; so saying, she left him without further discourse. Whilst the play was in rehearsal, Fintac went from house to house to prepossess his acquaintance in favour of a young poet, that gave such promising hopes. The decisive day is come ; the Connoisseur invites his friends to dinner. Come, gentlemen, said he, come and support your own work. You have pronounced the play to be an admirable one, and have warranted its success ; your honour is at stake. As for me, you know my weakness ; I have the bowels of a parent for all young people that have growing talents, and I feel with as much sensibility as they do themselves, the uneasiness they must necessarily undergo in these terrible moments.

After dinner, these very good friends tenderly embraced Celicour, and told him they were going to take their places in the pit, to be the witnesses, rather than the instruments of his triumph. They did repair thither indeed. The play began, but it never ended ; and the first signal of disgust was given by these very good friends.

Fintac was in the front boxes, trembling and pale as death. During the time the performance went on, this tender unhappy father did all that lay in his power to encourage the audience to support his child, till at last he saw it expire ; and, giving way to his grief, he crawled to his coach abashed, confounded, and complained of heaven to have brought him into the world in so barbarous an age. And where was poor Celicour all this while ? Alas ! they had done him the honour to place him in one of the pigeon-holes, where, seated on a faggot of thorns, he saw what was called his play, totter at the first act, stumble at the second, and fall flat at the third. Fintac promised to take him home, but in his confusion had for-

got. What will become of him? How make his escape from amidst such a crowd, who would certainly know him, and point at him with their finger; at last, seeing the house empty and the candles out, he took courage and ventured to creep down from his hole. But the stair-case and the passages were still crowded. He was discovered by the disorder he was in; and he heard them say, it is him to be sure. Yes, yes, 'tis him. Poor creature! I pity him, he may do better the next time. He perceived in one corner a group of authors, whose plays had been damned, making a joke of their hissed brother. He likewise saw those very good friends of the Connoisseur, who were overjoyed at his mortification, and turned from him. Overwhelmed with grief and confusion, he went to the true author, and his first care was to enquire for Agatha; he had full liberty to converse with her; for her uncle had shut himself up in his study. Did I not foretel it, the play is damned to all intents and purposes; shamefully damned, said Celicour, throwing himself into an armed chair. So much the better, replied Agatha.—What, when your lover is covered with shame! when merely to please you, he has made himself the talk and scoff of the whole town. No, madam; this is no time for jesting, 'tis more than I am able to bear; I love you far above my life; but in the horrid state of humiliation to which I am reduced, I am capable of renouncing life, and even you yourself; I can't imagine what restrained me from divulging the secret; it is not enough to be exposed to the public scorn, I am abandoned by your cruel uncle. I know him well, he will be the first to blush at sight of me, and what I have undergone to obtain your hand, perhaps, will for ever deprive me of that happiness. But let him pre-
pare

pare nevertheless to give me that dear hand, or take his play back to its true owner. There is no other way to make me amends and oblige me to silence. Heaven is my witness if, next to an impossibility, the play had succeeded, I should not have deprived him of the honour. It is damned, and I must bear the scandal; but it is the greatest effort of love, for which you alone can be the reward. It must be confessed, said Agatha, with a little sly provoking leer, on purpose to spur him on, that it is very disagreeable to be hissed for another's nonsense.—Disagreeable! it is what I would not do again if it was for my own father.—Why to be sure, it is very mortifying, to see with what a supercilious air an unhappy author, whose play has been hissed, is looked upon as he passes along.—Their contempt is to be borne, it is unjust, and I despise it; but proud pity is intolerable.—I suppose you were in a good deal of confusion, when you came down from the pigeon hole; did you salute the ladies?—I wished myself annihilated.—Poor thing! and how can you dare to shew your face again?—I swear it never shall be seen, except with the title of your husband; otherways, Mr. Fintac shall have the humiliation of having the brat returned to its natural father.—Are you then determined to reduce my uncle to the alternative?—Yes, I am absolutely determined. He must decide it this very evening. If he refuses his consent to our union, every news-paper to morrow shall have a paragraph, to expose the true author of the damned play. That is, said Agatha, with an air of triumph, the very thing that I wanted you to do; that was the object of all my *so much the better*s, which put you very near out of patience. Go to my uncle, be steady in

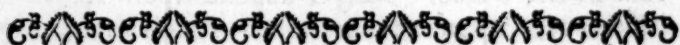
your resolution, and rest assured, that all will end well.

Now, Sir, said Celicour to the Connoisseur, what do you say to all this?—My good friend, I say that the publick is a stupid animal, and that one ought to renounce giving one's self the trouble of entertaining it. But however, take comfort, your work does you great honour in the opinion of men of taste—What do you mean by calling it my work? You know very well 'tis your own.—Speak lower, my dear child, speak lower.—O, 'tis very easy for you, Sir, to be moderate, you that prudently escaped the falling of your play on your own head; but I that am crushed under its ruins!—O my dear Celicour, don't imagine that such a fall hurts your reputation in the least; people of discernment, find in it the seeds of genius and of talents.—No, Sir; I flatter myself with no such thing; the play is a very bad one; I think that I have acquired a right to talk freely of it, and all the world is of the same opinion. Had it been crowned with success, I should have restored it to you; had it been but indifferently received, I would have taken it on my account; but such a total disaster is more than I can bear, and I must desire you to take the load yourself.—What, my dear child! at my time of day, in the decline of life to appear ridiculous! to forfeit in one day, a reputation built upon forty years study and meditation, and which is all the pleasure and comfort of my life: Can you have the cruelty to demand it?—Have you the barbarity to render me the victim of my complaisance? You know with what reluctance I consented.—I know how much I am obliged to you; but, my dear Celicour, you are young, and have time enough to retrieve your character:

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one brilliant success will obliterate this misfortune for ever. In the name of freindship support it with courage; I conjure you to it, with tears I conjure you.—I consent to your desires; but I am too sensible of the consequences of a bad setting out to expose myself to the prejudices it always leaves behind, against another undertaking of the like nature. I therefore renounce the stage, poetry, and *belles lettres*.—You are in the right; there are, for one of your age, so many other objects worthy of your ambition.—I have but one object, Sir, and that is in your power to bestow.—Name it; there is nothing that I would not do to serve you.—What is it you require?—Your niece's hand.—What, Agatha's?—Yes, I adore her; 'tis she, that out of regard for you, made me consent to every thing you exacted of me.—What, is she then in the secret?—Yes, Sir, she is.—Ah, no doubt, but her indiscretion has—Holla, there! tell my niece I want to speak with her.—Sir, be under no uneasiness, Agatha is lively, but far from being indiscreet.—Oh! I am all in a tremble. So Agatha, you are acquainted then, I find, with all that has passed, and the misfortune that has happened.—Yes, uncle.—And have you ever entrusted this fatal secret to any one?—To no creature in the world.—May I depend upon it?—'Tis true, upon my honour.—Well then, my dear children, let us bury it in eternal silence. I beg it of you, as I would for my life. Agatha, Celicour is in love with you; out of friendship for me, he renounces the theatre and the muses; and I owe him your hand as a recompence for so great a sacrifice. O! I am over-pay'd, cried Celicour, seizing her dear hand! So then, said Agatha smiling, I am doomed to marry an unhap-

py author ; but it shall be my study to make him forget his misfortune. The worst that can happen is, to deny him wit, and how many honest people do without it ! And now, my dear uncle, since Celicour renounces the fame of being a poet, would it not be as well for you, to renounce that of being a Connoisseur ? You will enjoy much more peace and quiet. Agatha was interrupted by the hasty intrusion of Clement, an old trusty valet-de-chambre of Fintac's. Ah, Sir, said he, almost out of breath, your friends, your very good friends !—Why, what of them, Clement ?—Oh, Sir, I was in the pit where they sat.—I know very well they were in the pit ; they went there on purpose to applaud.—Applaud ! O the traitors ! Had you but seen with what fury they fell upon the young man to tear him to pieces !—I must desire to be dismissed, if ever you suffer those wretches to darken your doors. Oh, infamous ! exclaimed Fintac. 'Tis done ; the illusion is vanished : I'll burn my books, and break off all commerce with the *litterati*. No, keep your books for your amusement, said Agatha, embracing her uncle ; and as for men of letters, have none but real friends, and you will find such as are worthy of every honest man's esteem.



The SCHOOL for FATHERS.

THE misfortune of a father, whose chief occupation lies in amassing riches for his children, is that he cannot himself give a watchful eye over their education ; a thing of much more importance than their fortunes. Young
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Timantes, called Mr. de Volny, was endowed by nature with an amiable figure, an easy temper, and good heart; but thanks to the great care of an over-fond mother, these happy constitutional parts were soon spoil'd; and the finest boy at six years old, was at fifteen a complete coxcomb. He was instructed in every frivolous amusement, and in not one single useful talent. It was mighty well for one like his father, who was obliged to mind his business, in order to enrich himself; but he who found his fortune ready made, ought to have no other study but how to enjoy it like a gentleman. It had been laid down to him as a maxim, never to keep company with his equals; therefore he never frequented any but young people of higher birth, who forgave his being richer than them, on condition that he should pay for their extravagances, as well as for his own. His father, indeed, had not the complaisance to furnish a fund for his liberalities; but his mother did honour to them all. She was not ignorant that, before he was twenty, he had, according to the polite custom, a retired house and a pretty mistress: one must over-look some little foibles; it was fit the young man should be diverted; she only required that he would make a kind of mystery of it, lest Timantes, his father, who knew nothing of the genteel world, should take it in his head to find fault with his son's amusements. If now and then, in the intervals from business, the father expressed his uneasiness at his wild course of life, the mother was always ready with an excuse, and was never at a loss for a civil untruth. Timantes, had indeed the satisfaction of hearing that no-body at the last ball had made a better figure than his son. A very great comfort truly, thought the good man, that I have spent so much

money to make a fine dancer! he could not conceive why this lord-like son of his must have his lackeys so bedizen'd, and why such a brilliant equipage! but Madam represented it to be quite necessary; for, to be considered in the world, you must appear on a certain footing. If he asked why his son kept such odd hours, as to stay out till two or three in the morning? he was answered, that the ladies of fashion never went to bed sooner. He did not at all relish these reasons, but, for peace sake, he was obliged to put up with them. In the mean time, Volny plunged headlong into all the follies of youth; when love looked down with pity on him, and undertook to bring him back to virtue.

His sister Lucia, who had not yet left the convent, where she received her education, had the happiness of having there a most agreeable companion. Angelica had lately lost her mother, and being too young to manage her father's household affairs, obtained his leave to retire into a convent, till he thought proper to dispose of her. The conformity of age and condition, but much more that of their characters, soon joined these lovely ladies in the strictest union. Lucia, in wiping the falling tears from her friend's eyes, seemed so sensible of her loss, that Angelica gave a free loose to the effusion of her grief. I have lost, said she, a mother, such a mother, as was perhaps not to be equalled. As soon as I knew what reason was, I saw nothing in her but a friend, an intimate friend, which had it not been for her virtues, and my own heart, that put me constantly in mind of my own duty and respect, her familiarity would have made me forget them. It was always under the mask of a pleasing amusement that she disguised her instructions;

tions; and what instructions! those of wisdom's self. With what colours she painted to my unexperienced eyes the world in which I was to live! what an alluring charm did she not bestow on a modest, virtuous behaviour, of which she was a living picture! by her enchanting pencil, all the virtues she drew became graces. Thus did this amiable daughter discourse of her mother, mixing the most moving regrets with the most tender praises; but her mind and perfections gave still a worthier praise to the divine lady who had formed them. If some of the young people about her, who were not in such affluent circumstances, stood in need of certain little ornaments, Angelica took delight in depriving herself of them, for such as could not purchase them. Her only difficulty was how to make it appear that those trifles laid them under no obligation; for her inward satisfaction was merely to oblige. Don't you think as I do, my dear Lucia? Much wealthier than our companions, this inequality humbles me; and I could almost blush for fortune, who so indiscriminately scatters her favours. If any thing can compensate the unfortunate, it is that they are loved and pitied; instead of which, our condition in life raises envy, and we are much favoured if we are not hated; wherefore, it is very necessary to endeavour to make them forget, by our goodness and meek behaviour, the dangerous advantage we have over them.

Lucia, enchanted with Angelica, would fain, if possible, be tied to her by every connexion. Ah! my dear friend, said she one day, who knows but we are on the brink of being separated from one another for ever: the very thought distracts me! but I have one in my head, which, if you should approve of you must see my
bro-

brother; there can be no objection to his parts or figure. He is very young, replied Angelica, and by what I have been told, very wild for one of his age; I am very much afraid that your mother has been too fond of him.

Volny came to see his sister, and she persuaded her friend to accompany her to the grate. Ah, sister! cried out the young fop, what charms! how can one be so handsome? what features, what shape, what eyes! in a convent, madam! no, 'tis a robbery, 'tis treason to the world. I knew very well, brother, said Lucia, that you would be enraptured when you saw her; but what are her outward beauties compared to those of her mind? My dear sister, she has the majestic look of the marchioness of Alcina, whom I had last night the honour of handing out from the opera; they talk of the shape and air of the countess of Flavel, with whom I am to pass this evening, but is there any comparison to be made between them and those of this charming lady? You know that I am intimately acquainted with young madam le Blanc, who is now the reigning toast; but I'll lay a hundred to one that she will be quite eclipsed whenever your amiable friend appears in the world.

Whilst Volny was thus launching forth, Angelica cast upon him a scornful look. I suppose, sir, said she, that you know very well that such praises are insults; and learn from me, sir, that the first sentiment that a virtuous woman ought to inspire, is that of making you cautious how you say any thing that may offend her modesty; and that it is not decent to bestow such unfounded compliments, but on such as have no modesty at all. There are some moments of surprize and admiration, replied Volny, somewhat dash'd, which

which we are not always master of restraining—if accompanied with any regard and respect they will never break out indecently. But I find I give my friend uneasiness in shewing my dislike to such a declaration; but I shall endeavour to sooth her, and leave you at your liberty; for, whether I am handsome or not, I set so little value on a gift which is often the source of being made despicable, that you have my full permission to enlarge on so fine a subject as much as you please; and depend upon it, I shall not even have the vanity to blush at any flattery you think fit to bestow. It is very plain, replied Volny, that one must have been accustomed to know one's own perfections to talk of them with such indifference. For my part, I cannot rate beauty at so low a price; but since you receive so unfavourably the homage it demands, we must adore it in silence. From this he turned the discourse, and talked of nothing but himself, his horses, his companions, and adventures. Lucia, whose eyes were fixed on Angelica, perceived with grief, that her brother's behaviour did not plead in his behalf.

What a pity it is, said Angelica, when Volny was gone, what a great pity, to be already spoiled at this time of day. But own, at the same time, replied Lucia, that he is charming.—Yes, and very ridiculous, that you must own, my dear friend.—Well, well he may amend.—I am afraid not; for it is very difficult to get the better of a habit you take delight in.—But he has seen you, he must of course be in love, and if he loves you, he will soon be virtuous and wise.

Volny took it for granted that he had made a conquest. My sister is in the right, said he, her companion is very beautiful, a little odd in her notions, but that even adds a relish to her charms.

She

She wants, indeed, high birth, and my mother will never consent to make an alliance but with people of quality. Nevertheless, I'll continue to visit her; there is nothing like her in the world, and it will be at least an amusement. He return'd then to see his sister, and with her he saw Angelica. Ah, my dear sister, said he, what have I done, that you should disturb my peace of mind? I enjoyed at ease my pleasures before I saw your lovely dangerous friend! ah, madam! how insipid is now the world, and how cold its amusements, for a heart wholly devoted to you! who could ever have imagined that I should be jealous of my sister? I who am introduced into all the most brilliant societies, solicited to partake of diversions of every kind, who could have thought it? but so it is; I would renounce the world to be in her happy situation; she is constantly with you, and tells you constantly how much she loves you, and she hears you profess for her a reciprocal inclination,---It is not without reason, my dear brother, that you envy my happiness; but it is in your power still to be more worthy of being envied.---Oh heavens, what do I hear? I fear I have said too much. No, my dear Lucia, interrupted Angelica, where designs are honourable, there needs no dissimulation. Your sister, sir, would be much pleased if fate had destined us for one another, and I am much obliged to her for her kind wishes. I tell you more, I so far flatter myself as to have the vanity to imagine, that I could make an honest man happy; nor can I have any objection, but your manner of life, to listen to the virtuous proposal of giving you my hand; the surest way, if it is agreeable to you to accept of it, is to resemble your sister---If that be all, I am happy, for every body flatters me that we are vastly alike.---They flatter
you

you indeed; but I that hate flattery, assure you, that you have not the least likeness of your sister. My dear Lucia is not proud of her perfections, either of the beauties of her mind or person.--- O madam, I protest that nobody sets upon himself less value than I do, and if I appear above the common run, it is without my knowledge.—But nothing (if you can carry on the similitude) is more innocent; no airs, no caprices; she is true nature without disguise; search into her whole conduct, and see if in her language or behaviour you can point out any thing studied or affected.—That is me again; for to shun affectation, I often even neglect the advantages that nature has given; I am told of it every day.—Lucia has no pretensions of her own, wholly occupied to set her companions in the fairest light, she is herself the only one she forgets.—Why there I am; for whatsoever advantages I am born with, am I ever heard to boast of them, and value myself the more? all own that I excel in every genteel perfection. I am the only one that never mentions it. If you love my sister for her modesty and simplicity, I am sure you will not dislike me; for they are my favourite virtues. I wish they may be so for your sake, replied Angelica; but if you think of pleasing me, I would advise you to examine yourself a little nearer.

You have given him a lesson, said Lucia, which he never will forget.—No: for he has forgot it already. Angelica was in the right. All that Volny retained of their interview was, that he looked upon it as certain, that she liked him vastly, and would be glad to be his wife. With how much *naïvety*, said he, she as good as confessed it; such candour adorns beauty!

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whether thro' vanity or love, he was really struck with her perfections; but that rising sentiment, if he did feel it, did not alter in the least his bad customs. Intoxicated with flattery, agreeably deceived by a young enchantress, he did not reflect how dearly he paid for her officiousness to please, and his vanity, soothed with every pleasure, sunk smiling down into a negligent supineness. Such voluptuous indolence is the most dangerous situation that a young man can fall into. Drag him out of it, and all is painful; the slightest duties become burthensome, and the smallest decorums fatiguing and dull. He has no joy but in that state of indolence and freedom, where all obey and none constrain.

Sometimes, indeed, Angelica came into his thoughts, but only like a dream. To be sure she is charming, said he, but what should I do with her? There is nothing so troublesome as a virtuous and faithful wife to a husband who is neither one nor t'other. My father too would be for enjoining me to be constant to my spouse. What a mixture it would be! love, jealousy, reproaches, tears, oh! all that frightens me; but yet I must see her again.

Lucia for this time came alone. Well, sister, what does she think of me?—Too much to your advantage—I could have sworn it.—That is in regard to your person. But that advantage, she says, makes you neglect many qualities, a thousand times more estimable, which you would want without it.—Your Angelica moralizes; it is a great pity. Tell her that there is nothing in life so dull, and that such sweet lips as hers were never formed to talk reason. It is not her, replied Lucia, that I would fain correct, it is you.—Of what would you correct me? Of loving
plea-

pleasure, and all that inspire it!—Pleasure, do you say? can there be a purer one than that of possessing the heart of a beauteous and virtuous woman, to love her and be loved? I believe you to be of a tender disposition, and I know that Angelica has sensibility; every thing that concerns her is dear to me.—But she is so difficult to please, what would you have?—Better morals.—Morals! at my age! but who has told her that mine are bad?—I do not know, but it is certain, she has a great prejudice against you, which gives me much uneasiness.—I warrant you I shall dissipate it. Bring her with you, do you mind me, sister, the next time. Let men be ever so discreet, said he, as he was going away, women can never hold their tongues; for all the cautious care I take to hide my amours, the secret still is divulged. But what harm can that do me? If Angelica wants a husband that never had an affair, she must marry a driveler or a child. Am I obliged to be constant to a woman before she is mine? I shall convince her how ridiculous it is to expect it. He returned to the convent. Angelica appeared, and he was much humbled and confounded, when he heard her descant with that superior eloquence, which reason and virtue inspire, to expose the shame and danger of vice. Can you think, sir, said she, after she had let him run on, slighting as much as he thought fit, the very principles of morality; can you think, I say, without confusion, of the union of a chaste and pure soul with one that is profaned and vilified by the greatest of passions? What value would you set upon a heart replete with such vices as you glory in? Do you think that we are less sensible than you of the charms of virtue, modesty, and innocence? You dispense with
those

those laws you impose upon us; but nature and reason are more equitable than you. For my part, I do not believe that a man dares presume to love me, whilst he is taken up by every inordinate desire, and if he has the misfortune to be unworthy of me before our acquaintance, it is by his study to wipe off the stain, that I must judge whether I ought to forget it. Volny wanted to persuade her, that in changing his state, he should alter his conduct; that love, virtue, and beauty had superior rights, and that all frivolous and temporary amusements, that had occupied an indolent, unwary temper, must disappear at sight of an object, created to inspire constancy and adoration. And have you any faith, said she, in these sudden revolutions? Do you know that they always suppose a generous, delicate, and a noble mind? And that there are few such to be found? And really it is giving but little hopes of so great a change, when, plunged in the forbidden gulf of vice, you wait for the moment to become virtuous all at once.

Volny, surprised and abashed at the gravity of this discourse, answered, that he flattered himself she did not mean any personal application. Excuse me, said Angelica, I have heard a great deal said of you; besides, I know very well what manner of life you modish young gentlemen are apt to lead. You are rich and unconstrained; so, without a miracle, you must be more disorderly than others. But, however, this opinion of mine should not discourage you. You fancy you love me, I wish it may be so; for it will, perhaps, make you form the resolution, and give you power to become estimable. You have before your eyes an excellent example in your father, who, without those embellishments you
make

make parade of, has acquired the highest reputation, by talents beneficial to his country, and to himself. He is what I call a man to be admired; and when you prove yourself worthy of him, I shall be proud to be worthy of you.

This discourse raised in Volny some serious reflections; but his friends came and dispell'd them. He was invited to a delicious supper, and Fatme, Doris, and Chloe were to be of the party. Joy and petulance sparkled on every side; and, if Volny's heart did not consent, his senses had at least their full share. You may very well imagine, that in this decent circle, a serious attachment was looked upon as the height of folly. It is very well when fortune is in view to submit to it. But a young man born to riches! can there be one so very stupid or so very mad, as to give himself a yoke? If he does not love the woman he marries, it is a load he wantonly charges himself with; and if he loves her, what a dull method of pleasing must that of a husband be? Is there any thing so very ridiculous in the world as a husband-lover? And if it should succeed, what is the consequence? To be fond of one another for six months, and be quite indifferent all their life after. My dear Volny, if you think of marriage, you are an undone man. Should you have a fancy for a virtuous sweet-heart, wait till another weds her; she'll come round at last, and you may be happy in your turn. Could you suppose that this unthinking youth believed these reflections very reasonable? But however, said he, what an ascendant must virtue and beauty assume over us, when they can make us forget the charms of ease and the value of one's liberty?

He would willingly not have returned to Angelica; but he could not bear with himself, if he passed

passed a few days without seeing her. Nevertheless, such are the attractions of debauchery, that whilst he left this charming maid, even when he was penetrated and ravished with her understanding and beauty, even then would he plunge into all those follies, of which she had just made him ashamed.

Is it possible, that the death of a mother should prove her son's greatest happiness? Volny, in losing his, knew that the source, which supplied his extravagancies must cease to flow. But it did raise in him the least thought of his renouncing them. His only anxiety was to find ways and means of furnishing what he had no longer any funds to support. The only son of a rich father, who consequently must be rich in his turn, let him be ever such a spendthrift, finds always at command the pernicious facility of anticipating on his fortune. Timantes, now on the decline of life, would fain have had a respite from business, and engage his son, for his own sake, to share with him the fatigue, as the whole profit would be his. Sir, said Volny, to his father, I should be quite out of my element; I do not think I am born for such an employment.—Why, would you rather chuse to go into the army? I have not yet consulted my inclination on that head; nor do I see any reason why I should consider of it at all. Perhaps you would rather make a figure at the bar? No, sir, I hate black gowns of all sorts.—What then would you be?—Why, my mother had in view a place at court, which requires little or no attendance, and gives one a rank—Very well, child, I shall think of it. An excellent scheme to be sure. Alas! I see, said the good man to himself, that my son wants to lead a dissolute, idle life. But I will prevent it, if I can. A place at court

court that gives rank, and lays you under no manner of constraint! no doubt but it is very commodious. Then why should I still toil under the trouble of business? No: I will take my rest, and have no other occupation than, what perhaps I undertake too late, to watch and direct the conduct of my son, which affords me no prospect at present, but that of grief and vexation. For, whoever loves idleness, must love all the vices of which she is the mother.

But what was Timantes's affliction, when he was convinced that his son, infatuated with pride, and given up to the loosest pleasures, had his mistresses, his pimps, and his sycophants; that he gave grand entertainments, and gamed so deep, as to run the risk of being ruined! Ah! said the good man, it was my own fault; it was my duty to endeavour to retrieve him. But by what means? The habit is contracted; and vice has taken root; how shall I eradicate it? If I offer at compulsion, this inconsiderate youth would fly me; to refuse paying his debts, is making him liable to be insulted, and I should myself contribute to his shame; it is blasting in his abandoned heart the remaining buds of honour, which may, if properly cultivated, sprout forth, and flourish again. Confine him? No, heaven be praised, he is not so bad as to give the law a power to deprive him of his natural right of liberty. There are none but unnatural parents that are more severe to their children than the laws. But, however, he is running head-long to his ruin; how shall I snatch him from the precipice? Let us trace the ill up to the fountain's head. It is my wealth that has made him giddy; had he been the son of one of middling fortune, he would, like many more, have been modest,

pru-

prudent, and industrious. The remedy is obvious, and my resolution is fixed.

Timantes began immediately to withdraw and secure his effects, so as to have them safe and independent. Except his estate of Volny, and his house in town, his fortune was all contained in his port folio; and he had taken great care to settle all matters with his correspondents. Things being thus contrived, he came home one day, when his son and some friends were waiting for him to dinner, with an air of dejection that surprised them. One of the guests could not refrain from enquiring what could be the cause of it. You will soon know it, said he; but pray let us make haste and dine, for my mind at present is taken up with things of the utmost consequence to me and mine. Dinner passed with very little conversation, and as soon as over, Timantes took his son into his closet; Volny, said he, I have very bad news to tell you, but let us support our misfortunes with courage. My dear son, I am ruined. Half my fortune has been taken by the enemy; and half of the rest embezzled by a false, careless friend, that I confided in. The desire I had to make you rich tempted me to launch out too much, which has been my ruin. Very happily I owe but little; and when my affairs are settled, I suppose I may save from the wreck the estate of Volny, which is worth about a thousand a year. With that, and the little remains of my fortune, we may subsist decently. It is a terrible falling off; but you are young, and may find ways to rise again. I never made a wrong use of the trust my correspondents reposed in me, and I dare say, my name will have credit still in every part of the world. But I am too old to begin again, it is yours to repair the misfortunes of your father. I
began

began business with small encouragement, yet I succeeded. You set out with much greater advantages, and with probity, industry, and my fatherly instructions, I do not in the least doubt but that you will surpass me in every respect.

A benighted traveller, who sees a thunderbolt fall almost upon his head, would not be near so much thunder-struck as was Volny at his father's discourse. What! sir, ruined? undone without any resource?—You are my son, the only resource I have left, and I have no hopes but what are founded on you. Go and advise with yourself, whilst I put our affairs in such order as is suitable to our situation.

The news of his misfortune was soon the public talk. The grand house in town was let; the fine equipages were sold; a modest dwelling, a few domestics, enough for what they wanted; all this proclaimed their sad reverse of fortune. It is needless to say that the number of Timantes's friends diminished every day. Those of Volny were concerned for his misfortune. How is this, said one, your father is, I hear, undone?—It is too true.—What a folly! then I suppose you don't keep your little retired snug house!—Alas! no.—I am sorry for it, for I had laid it out to sup with you there to-morrow. Another accosts him with, Tell me how all this is come about? I am told that your fortune is turned topsy-turvy.—It is reduced to little or nothing.—Thy father is the most injudicious man in the world; what the devil had he to do in an affair of this kind? You know how to ruin yourself without his aid. I am quite afflicted, said a third, I hear you have sold the pretty horses.—I have indeed.—If I had known that you was resolved to part with them, I would have bought them; but it is so like you, you never think

think of your friends when an occasion offers—I assure you I was taken up with things of much greater consequence.—What, with your pretty girl, I suppose, is it not so? You can't furnish her any longer; but for all that, let me tell you, that she will always have a regard for you; for I know she loves you. Some, as they passed him, cried, Adieu, Volny; and others took great care to shun him.

As for his little mistress, that he had enriched, she was so afflicted for his loss, that she could not bear the thoughts of seeing him. She wrote to him, that she flattered herself, as he knew her great sensibility, that he would not aggravate, by his presence, the grief she could scarcely bear in his absence. Then it was, pierced to the quick with the cold indifference of his pretended friends, and the base ingratitude of his kept mistress, that Volny found the veil removed from before his eyes. Where have I been, said he? What have I done? What a life should I have led? What reproaches do I not deserve? How can I make atonement for my follies? I will go and see my sister; he durst not say he would go and see Angelica.

Lucia was overwhelmed with grief, at the bad news her father acquainted her with. It is not for myself, she said, that I am concerned; I am very well here; for to live at ease, when retired from the world, a very little suffices; but you, my dear father, but my brother!—It cannot be helped, my dear child, I was not born in such affluence as you have seen me. If my son behaves prudently, he will still have enough; if he does not, he will have too much. Lucia's affliction increased at sight of her brother. I have not power, said she, to offer you any comfort; but I will call to our aid Angelica, our prudent and tender friend.

—Oh!

—Oh ! no, sister, I have not deserved that she should take any interest in my concern. It was when I ought to have sacrificed my follies, that I should have intitled myself to be worthy of her pity and esteem ; but now that all abandon me, my repentance, whilst it humbles me, can have nothing flattering for her. Thus saying, Angelica came of her own accord, and with the most moving and compassionate air, assured him, how sincere-
 sorry she was for his loss. It is a great misfortune for your father, it is likewise so to you, dear sister ; but, perhaps, it may prove an advantage to you. It would be cruel to afflict you with reproaches, when we should endeavour to give you comfort. But you may reap from the loss of your riches a more precious benefit, than what those riches could bestow.—I made an ill use of them, and heaven chastises me for it ; but my punishment is surely too great, when it deprives me of the hopes of possessing the charming object of my passion. I was young, and I believe without this mortifying lesson, that time, love, and reason would have got the better of my irregularities, and rendered me less unworthy of your regard.—I see you are cast down ; it is not from presumption now, but from despondency, that you are to be preserved ; and what would have been dangerous to own in your prosperity, is fit you should know in your adversity. Whether or not it was impossible for me to think ill of my friend's brother, or whether I had that prepossession in your favour, which comes without reflection, I fancied I perceived in you, in spite of all the errors and irregularities of youth, an honest heart at bottom. Your past follies have nothing disgraceful in the eyes of the world. The road to honour and virtue lies open before you, and it is much easier for you now

than ever to become what I would have you to be. Your reverse of fortune is a terrible stroke; I do not pretend to make an encomium on mediocrity: it is very hard, very mortifying for those that have been rich, to be no longer so; but the misfortune is not without a remedy. Conform yourself to your present situation; rouse from that indolent lethargy, in which you were sunk; and let the love of business and application succeed to idleness and dissipation. Do your utmost, if you have any regard for me, to re-establish that balance of fortune, which is generally required in alliances. My father, who loves me, will not suffer me to be unhappy; and I hope he will leave me at liberty to wait for you. If, in five years, your affairs are recovered, all obstacles will be removed. But if, with œconomy, prudence, and assiduity, you should have the misfortune not to succeed, all the wealth I shall then desire of you is, that you will have a regard for yourself. I am an only daughter; I have an independent fortune, I will throw myself at my father's feet, I shall obtain his permission to make an honest man amends for the injustice of fate. Lucia could no longer refrain from embracing Angelica. Ah! divine creature, she cried, how properly you are named! none but a celestial soul is capable of so much virtue. Volny, full of tenderness and respect, applied his lips to the bar of the grate, which Angelica's hand had touched. Ah! madam, said he, you render my misfortune dear to me. I will employ every moment of my life in endeavouring to deserve all this goodness. Permit me to come often and learn of you that courage, virtue, and wisdom, which I still want to be worthy of you.

He

He retired, not as formerly, conceited and proud of himself; but humble and confounded, to have so little known the value of the most generous heart that heaven ever formed: he went into his father's closet; your fortune, said he, is changed, but your son is still more so; and I flatter myself, you will some day thank heaven for the reverse that restores me to my duty and myself. Vouchsafe, Sir, to be my guide and instructor. Assiduous, docile, and laborious, I shall prove the support and comfort of your age; pray dispose of me as you think proper. The good old gentleman was transported at what he heard, but disguised his joy, and only praised his good resolutions. He then presented his son to his correspondents, and desired their confidence and friendship for him. It is natural to pity, in their misfortunes, those we esteem. Every body, moved with the losses of this honest man, thought it an honour to relieve and comfort him.

Volny, who re-assumed the name of Timantes, had all the help possible to facilitate his beginnings. His skill, which at first was only his father's, was very soon his own, and encreased his credit every day. Those moments of respite from business, which his father obliged him to take, were spent with Angelica, who attributing, partly to herself, the surprising alteration in her lover, enjoyed what she had done with the double satisfaction of love and friendship. Lucia never ceased admiring her, returning thanks for her kindness.

One day that her father came to see her, and was expatiating on the happiness his son procured him, Do you know, Sir, said Lucia, to whom we are obliged for his reform? To the most beautiful and virtuous person that lives, to Alcimon's

mon's only daughter, my friend and companion. She then related to him all that had passed. You move my very soul, said he, I must be acquainted with this heavenly maid. Angelica came and received Timantes's compliments, with a modesty that added graces to her beauty. Sir, said she, I am under my father's direction; I own if he is so good as to let me dispose of myself, and if you are content with your son, I should be proud of being your daughter. My friendship for Lucia inspired me with the first desire, my respect for you has strengthened it, and even your misfortunes have only made me interest myself the more in all that concerns your welfare; and if the conduct of your son proves such as you wish, and as I desire, whether he be wealthy or not, the most honourable and most pleasing use that I can make of my fortune, will be to share it with him. At this discourse, the old gentleman was very near letting his secret escape; but however, he had the prudence to conceal it still. I could not have thought, Madam, said he, that it was possible to encrease the desire a father must naturally have, to see his son virtuous and wise; but you have added a new motive of concern to that of parental love. I cannot tell how heaven will dispose of us; but in every situation of life, and to my last breath, you may depend upon my eternal gratitude.

When he returned home, how comes it, said he to his son, that you never entrusted me with the follies of your youth? I am not surprised you did not, and I forgive you. But why have you concealed from me a virtuous inclination? Why not own to your father your love for Angelica, my old friend's daughter? Alas! said young Timantes, have not you enough of your misfortunes,

tunes, without my vexing you with my troubles? But who has revealed my secret?—Your sister, Angelica herself; I am delighted, I am in love with her, she must be my daughter!—That would be my supreme happiness; but ah! how much is her fortune superior to mine!—No matter, with time and patience, yours may come up to it. Pay your addresses constantly to that amiable person.—I see, Sir, nobody else but her and my sister; and all my ambition is to make myself worthy of her and of you.

Timantes tasted the inexpressible satisfaction of seeing every day the success of the trial to which he had put his son. He had the perseverance to let him, for five years, apply himself in repairing his fortune; and now, weaned from all public diversions, his whole time was spent between his computing-house and the grate of Angelica's convent. At length, Timantes finding a good habit was contracted, and all the buds of former follies blasted to the very root; he paid a visit to Alcimon. My dear old friend, said he, I am informed that you have a most charming daughter. I come to propose a match for her quite suitable, in respect to birth, and very advantageous in point of fortune. I am obliged to you, replied Alcimon; but I must tell you beforehand, I will have none but one of my own condition, who will not think it a dishonour to call me father. I won't have worked all my life to give my daughter a husband that is ashamed of me. The man, resumed Timantes, that I am to propose, is the very thing you want. He is rich, well-behaved, and, I am sure, will always honour and respect you.—Who is he?—That I must not tell, but at my own house, where I invite you to come and renew, glass in hand, a

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friendship of forty years. And pray grant me the favour to bring Angelica with you; my daughter, who is her convent companion, shall have the honour to accompany her; and there you both will see the young man in question. And to lay you under no constraint, he shall not know that I have spoke to you about him. The day fixed Alcimon and Timantes went and fetched Angelica and Lucia. They sat down to table, and sent word to young Timantes, who was busy in the compting-house, that dinner was served. He knew nothing of the happiness that was preparing for him. He came into the parlour, but what surprize! Angelica and her father! what must he believe, what could he hope from this unexpected visit? Why was it made a mystery to him? Every thing seemed to forebode happiness; but that happiness was not probable. In this confusion of thought, he almost lost the use of his senses; a swimming in his head dimm'd his eyes, his tongue faulter'd, and a profound bow was the only expression he had to shew how much he was penetrated with the honour his father and he received. Lucia, who saw her brother's embarrass, ran into his arms, and gave him time to recover himself. He embraced her tenderly; he thought he pressed to his bosom Angelica with his sister; he could hardly let her go.

Old Timantes was so joyous at table, that every body was surprized. Alcimon, though taken up with the thoughts of the demand his friend had made, and impatient to see the young man proposed, yielded nevertheless to the pleasure of enjoying his old friend. He had even the goodness to converse with young Timantes. I see, said he, that you are your father's consolation.

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Every body talks with praise of your talents, and application to business. It is the advantage of our calling, that an honest and intelligent person, with industry, can never fail of success. Ah, my good friend, replied Timantes, it requires much time to raise a fortune, and very little to squander it away. What a pity it is that I have not mine to offer you? Instead of proposing a stranger to espouse your daughter, I should have solicited that blessing for my son. I would have preferred him to any other, I assure you said Alcimon.—Indeed!—Yes, indeed; I speak sincerely; but you know very well, that it is not prudent to run the risque of having a numerous family, without a proper provision for them. If that be all, said Timantes, things are not so desperate, but that they may be retrieved. So saying, he went out from table, and returned immediately. Look you here, said he, this is my port folio; it is still pretty well furnished. Perceiving Alcimon's astonishment, know, my good friend, said he, that the story of my being ruined was all a fiction. That young man there had been spoil'd by the notion of being rich. To amend him, I knew of no other method but to make and every body believe that I was undone. This feint has succeeded to my wish, and I am very sure that he will never fall again into his youthful errors. He may now be depended on. Yes, my dear son, I am as rich as ever, nay richer, by the savings of five years, besides the fruits of your labour. It is then for him, said he, to his friend, that I ask Angelica in marriage. And if you want any other inducement to agree to the match, I tell you, that he saw her in the convent, where he conceived for her a most tender and passionate
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love; and that it was that love, more than his misfortunes, which has recalled him to his duties. Whilst Timantes was only founding the dispositions of Angelica's father, she, her friend, and her lover, were wavering betwixt the emotions of hope and fear; but at sight of the happy portfolio, and that Timantes's ruin was but a fable, and then the demand he made of Angelica for his son, Lucia transported, and almost out of herself, flew into her father's arms; young Timantes, still more transported, fell at Alcimon's knees; and, Angelica, pale and trembling, could scarce believe her eyes. Alcimon took the young man up in his arms, and embraced him. Then turning to old Timantes, my good friend, said he, who ever has a mind to contrive an agreeable surprize, must come and take a lesson at your school. You are indeed a good father, and your son deserves to be made happy.



THE HAPPY DIVORCE.

A MORAL TALE.

THE troubles and inconstancies of most people generally proceed from their drawing consequences from wrong principles. Too great a prevention in favour of the pleasures we have in pursuit, is the cause of our neither tasting nor enjoying them when once they are in our possession; the imagination disappointed, and the heart discontented, we carry our views to some other object, which in a distant perspective charms us, and on a nearer approach again, we find that we are deceived. Thus from illusion to illusion, we pass our life in running from one chimera to another.

ther. 'Tis the weakness of lively and delicate sensation; even nature's self seems deficient for them; and from thence proceeds the pride we take in fixing the inclination of a pretty woman.

Lucilia, when in the convent, had pictured to her mind the charms of love, and the delights of matrimony in all the gay colours of the imagination of a lady just turned of fifteen, with all the blue on the plum, untouched, unsullied.

She, as yet, knew nothing of the world but what she had read in those ingenious fictions, which may be called the romance of human kind. What so easy for an author as to give love and Hymen all the charms his imagination suggests. 'Twas in that light that Lucilia, abiding by their descriptions, looked upon lovers and husbands, just as they are represented in novels and fables. Always loving, always lovely, saying the sweetest things, and whose only study was, how to please either by new regards, or varied entertainments.

Such were Lucilia's notions when she was taken from the convent to be married to the marquis of Lisiere. His person noble, graceful and interesting spoke in his favour, and his first interviews with Lucilia banished her irresolutions. She did not as yet perceive that ardour of passion which she expected; but she was modest enough to think that she had not all the perfections requisite to inflame him at first sight. Love sets out gently, to be enabled to run the race with more strength and swiftness. However, the marriage was consummated; and still the marquis's inclination was not as yet become a violent passion.

Solid reason and sound morals were the basis of Lisiere's character. When he married so young a person, his design was, in order to make her

happy, to endeavour first of all to gain her friendship; very sure that a man of strict honour may easily guide a woman of good principles, if once he gains her confidence and good opinion. For any husband that pretends to exert more authority than he ought, only provokes his wife to deceive him, and authorizes her aversion. To proceed, therefore, on the plan which he had laid down, it was essential not to overact the lover: for passion knows no bounds. He had consulted his heart before he engaged it, to find out what degree of inclination he had for Lucilia; fully resolved never to marry where he was desperately in love. So that Lucilia found in her husband nothing but a cheerful, tender friendship, an attentive complaisance that never altered that pure and tranquil pleasure: in short, that reasonable love, which never has either the hot or the cold fit. She had flattered herself at first that it was to be a succession of transports, raptures, admiration, intoxication, and all that; she was disappointed; Lisiere's even temper was always the same.

Is it not very odd? thought she; I am young, they say that I am handsome, and yet my husband has no love for me! I am his wife; that's title enough to be neglected. But why should I let him remain in this cold security? He cannot long for what he already possesses without any inquietude. I must, to make him love, make him jealous. How very unjust are most men! they must be plagued in order to be pleased. Be faithful, loving, obliging, they are indifferent, and we are neglected. That sameness of bliss is to them dull and insipid; a little coquetry and caprice awakes them from their lethargy. They set no value on pleasure, but in proportion to the
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the trouble it costs to obtain. Lisiere, less sure of being loved, would be infinitely more in love. I have followers enough to make him uneasy, if he be but capable of jealousy.

Having thus settled this fine scheme, Lucilia began to act her part. Dissimulation, affectation, all that coquetry has in store was exerted; every thing was mysterious in her conduct. She made new acquaintances, and visited where her husband never did. This is what I foresaw, said Lisiere, my wife is like other wives. We have been married not six months, and she is already sick of matrimony! what a fine situation I should be in, had I been passionately in love with her! Happily for me, the esteem and inclination I have for her, do not deprive me of my judgment. Let us make a right use of it then; dissemble, conquer myself, and only employ fair means, good nature and good usage; that does not indeed always meet with success, but complainings, reproaches and constraint will succeed much less. This great tranquillity and moderation of the marquis, put Lucilia out of all patience. Alas! said she, I find, let me do what I can, he never will be fond of me. He is one of those cold inanimate beings, that nothing can move, nor interest; and so I am condemn'd to pass my life with a block of marble, that neither loves nor hates. O love! thou delight of feeling souls! thou charm of tender hearts! thou who raisest us above the skies on thy glowing wings! where are those flaming darts with which thou piercest happy lovers? Where those ravishing desires, those delightful transports that they inspire by turns? where are they? continued she: Why in a free and independent passion, in the union of two hearts,

hearts, that give themselves with their own accord to each other. Why should I expect the marquis to be in love with me? What sacrifices have I made him? By what efforts, by what heroic sentiments, have I stirred up a sensibility in his heart? Where was the merit to have obeyed, in accepting a husband young, handsome, and rich, which was chosen for me without my consent? What has love to do in a marriage that is only suitable? Nevertheless, this is the fate of a young person of sixteen, on whom, I may say, without vanity, that nature has bestowed a figure to please; and what is more, a heart to love. For, in short, it would be affected to pretend to be ignorant of either the one or the other. And then, at the age of sixteen, to be condemned to pine away in cold indifference, and pass over without any comfort or joy, at least twenty years, that might have been spent in a succession of pleasures; I say at least twenty years, for surely one may be thought not burthen some to the world before turned of forty. Cruel parents! was it for you then that I was married? You have chose me an honest man for my husband; a fine present truly! so thus I am to be fatigued, and fatigued all my life with an honest man! indeed my case is much to be pitied.

Discontent gained upon her, and bad humour of course; and Lisiere was ready to conceive that she had an aversion for him. His friends became disagreeable, and their visits importunate. She received them with a coolness, which was next to saying, I don't desire to see you again. The marquis could no longer put up with her behaviour. Madam, said he, the intention of marriage is to make each other happy. 'Tis very plain that we are not so, and 'tis useless to affect
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a constancy that one is weary of. Our fortunes enable us to live separate, and to resume that liberty of which we imprudently made a mutual sacrifice. Live by yourself, as I intend to live by mine; I only desire of you, in respect to me, the decency and the regard, which you owe to yourself. 'Tis mighty well, Sir, answered Lucilia, with an air of disdainful vexation. Every thing was immediately settled accordingly; Madam had her separate apartment, her equipage, her table, her servants; in a word, her own household.

Lucilia's rendezvous soon became the most brilliant in Paris. Her society was sought for by all the pretty ladies and fine gentlemen. But Lucilia still wanted a somebody; the difficulty was, how to make her take the first step; the rest would follow of course. However, she enjoy'd the homage of a splendid circle, and her heart, unresolved as yet, seemed to suspend its choice only to render it more flattering. At last it was guessed who was to be the happy man; for at count Blamzé's approach every competitor lowered his tone. He was the very man with whom a young lady ought to be most on her guard; for it was an affair decided, that nobody could resist him, therefore nobody attempted to do it. He was excessive handsome, with a noble graceful air; spoke seldom, but well. When he talked of little common idle things, he made them interesting by the sweetness of his voice, and his manner of delivery. One could not call Blamzé a fop, there was so much dignity in his foppery. A modest pride form'd his character. He decided with politeness and great precision; he listened to contradiction with good nature, and only answered with a smile; and if he was pressed to explain

plain himself, he smiled again, remained silent, or only repeated what he had said before. He never disputed the opinions of others, nor would give any satisfaction for his own: in short, it was the most condescending politeness, and the most peremptory presumption that ever were seen united in a young man of quality.

His assurance had somewhat imposing that constituted him the oracle of taste, and the legislator of the mode. Nobody was sure of having a good fancy in the choice of the colour and trimming of their cloaths, or the varnish of their equipages, without a nod of Blamzé's approbation. It is mighty well, 'tis very pretty, were words from his mouth of precious signification, as his silence was passing a mortifying sentence. The despotism of his opinion extended even to beauty, wit and talents. If in the circle of ladies he honoured any one with a particular attention, she grew a toast from that instant.

Blamzé's reputation had reached Lucilia's house before he made his appearance there; and the great deference his rivals shewed for him doubled the esteem she had conceived. She was struck with his comeliness, and still more surprized at his modesty. He presented himself with the most respectful air, and took the lowest place; but soon the regards of the whole company were directed to him. His dress was a model of taste, all the young people about him studied it with the minutest attention. His Brussels, his embroidery, his head-dress, every thing was scrutinised; they took memorandums where his milliners and trades-folks were to be found. Is it not very odd, said they, that no-body has such colours and such patterns as he! Blamzé modestly

ly owned that it did require some little care. Industry, said he, is arrived to its highest pitch; it only wants to be guided and enlightened. So saying, he took a pinch of snuff. The box was a new object of curiosity; 'twas the work of a young artist that Blamzé had made known to the world. The price of every thing was inquired of; but he smiling, said, that he never knew the price of any thing. The ladies whispered to one another the name of the person where particulars might be had.

I am quite ashamed, Madam, said Blamzé to Lucilia, that these trifles take up an attention which an object so much more interesting ought to engross. Excuse me if I have answered the frivolous questions of these giddy young folks; never did complaisance cost me dearer. I hope, added he, in a low voice, that you will be so good as to give me leave to make myself amends in waiting on you when less taken up. I shall be glad to see you at any time, answered Lucilia with a blush; so what with her blushing, and Blamzé's bowing with a gracious smile as he retired, the company judged that an intrigue was settled, and would soon come to a conclusion. Lucilia, who did not know the consequence of words whispered in her ear by a gentleman, and who was not conscious of having given a rendezvous, hardly took notice of the insinuating looks of the ladies, nor of some little jokes that escaped the men. Insensibly she grew thoughtful, and remained so all the evening. Blamzé was still the subject of their conversation: every body spoke well of him; his very rivals mentioned him with esteem, and even Lucilia's rivals with complaisance. To be sure nobody was more polite, gallant, respectful, and all that; for of twenty ladies with whom he
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had reason to be satisfied, not one of them ever complained of him. At these words, Lucilia roused from her supineness, and nothing escaped her observation. Twenty ladies! said she to herself, that surely is exaggerated! But yet why be surprised! Is he not in search of one that is worthy to fix him, and capable of fixing herself?

Next day it was hoped that he would come before the crowd of visitors; he is expected; but no appearance of him; uneasiness of course; what can be the meaning? we begin to lose patience, a note is brought in, 'tis read, and we are in good humour again. He was in the greatest anguish imaginable to be deprived of the moments which would have been the happiest of his life. Some importunate visitors had broke in upon him; he fain would have escaped them, but these importunates were of the highest rank; so that it was impossible for him to have the pleasure of waiting on her till next day; at the same time he begged that Lucilia would admit of a morning visit to shorten the cruel minutes of absence. The company assembled as usual, and Lucilia received them with an air of indifference, that shocked every body. Blamzé is not to be here to-night, said Clarissa with a dejected look. He sups at Araminta's in her little lodge. Lucilia turned pale, and the mirth and gaiety of the rest of the company augment the vexation, which she endeavoured to conceal. Her first movements were never to see the wretch again. But who knew whether he was not innocent of what was laid to his charge? and whether what Clarissa had said, was not the effects of spite and jealousy? And after all, she was under no engagement, and it was but justice to hear what he had to say before he was condemned.

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She was still at her toilet when Blamzé appeared, in all the disorder'd undress of a rake that had sat up all night. Lucilia was not a little surpris'd to see a gentleman, she was but barely acquainted with, take such a familiar freedom ; and had he given her time, most likely would have resent'd it. But he said so many pretty things on her blooming complexion, on her beautiful hair, and so forth, that she had not the courage to find fault. Nevertheless, she could not get Araminta out of her head ; but it was not decent for her to appear jealous as yet ; and a reproach would discover at once her thoughts. She only asked him, as by way of talk, how he had pass'd the evening ?— Pass'd it ! why with very troublesome folks. Happy are they who are unknown to the crowd, who can live retir'd, and enjoy themselves, and those they like. Take my advice, Madam, beware of this whirl of company that surrounds you. Farewel, rest, farewel, liberty, if you give into it. But a propos of whirls and crowds, what is your design in receiving all the giddy brain'd young fellows that attend your court ? They dispute among themselves who shall have the victory ; have you deign'd to make a choice ? The very easy familiarity of Blamzé had at first astonish'd Lucilia ; but this question confounded her quite. I fear I am indiscreet, resum'd Blamzé, who perceiv'd it ? Not at all, answer'd Lucilia with great sweetness ; as I have nothing to hide, I need no dissimulation, nor do I fear an inspection. I own that I am amus'd with the little sallies of these volatile youths, but I do not find one amongst them who deserves a serious attachment. Blamzé spok'e of his rivals with indulgence ; and thought Lucilia rather too severe. For example, there is Cleon, said he, has where-
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withal to become amiable ; indeed he knows nothing as yet ; 'tis a great pity ; for he talks well enough of what he does not understand, and proves plainly that with a great deal of wit, one may do without common sense. As for Clairsons, he is an arrant school boy, and only wants an experienced female tutoress to be well disciplined. The character of Pomlac pronounces a man of sentiments, and that simplicity he has, which is so very like silliness, would please me well enough if I was a woman ; some coquette will make advantage of him. Then that little Linval is so self-conceited, that though he was exposed twenty times, one would still be surprised if it humbled him. None of all these are in the least fit for you, and you remain, continued Blamzé, unengaged and free ; but what use do you make of your freedom ? I enjoy it, replied Lucilia. That is childish, answered the count ; one never enjoys one's liberty, but at the moment you renounce it ; and one ought never to think of preserving it, but in order to lose it a propos. You are young and beautiful, don't imagine that you continue long your own mistress ; for if you do not bestow your heart, it will bestow itself. But amongst those that aspire to the sweet possession, it is of great consequence to make a good choice. Whether you love or do not love, you certainly will be beloved. That is not the point that makes me uneasy. At your age you want a lover, in whom you may find an adviser, a guide, a friend ; one who knows the world, who can point out the dangers, and shew you how to avoid them. A man like you, I suppose, said Lucilia ironically, with a smile of derision. Very true ; I don't see how you can do better, answered Blamzé ; I am the very thing for you, if it was
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not for all these folks that besiege you. But how to get rid of them? O don't attempt it, reply'd Lucilia; it would give cause for too many reproaches, and create me too many enemies. As for reproaches and complaints, said the count, with great coolness, I am-us'd to hear them; and as for enemies, who cares for them, when you are out of their power, and have sense enough to live for yourself. At my age, said Lucilia smiling, one is as yet too timorous, if 'twas only the apprehension of being attacked by an Araminta, I tremble at the very thought. An Araminta! replied Blamzé without any emotion, that Araminta is, I assure you, a very reasonable person, and not at all to be dreaded. I find you have been told something about her; here is my history in regard to that lady. Araminta is one of those has-been beauties, who finding her charms on the decline now, not to be quite forgot, and if possible to keep alive the embers of an expiring fire, it is necessary to make an eclat in the world, in order to which she desired that I would take some particular notice of her. I could not civilly refuse her request, and so I entered into her views. To make our adventure more mysterious, and consequently more conspicuous, she would take a retired house for our meetings. 'Twas in vain that I represented to her the folly of being at that expence, for a month or so, which would be the utmost that I could possibly devote to her. No matter; the house was furnished in the most elegant taste, unknown to me, and my promise was exacted to come and spend the evening there in a kind of a secret stolen manner, for that was the essential point; and last night was the time fixed upon. Araminta, to have

have it more private, had invited but five of her intimate friends, and I was not permitted to bring any greater number of mine. Accordingly I went. I acted my part, gave myself all the airs of gallantry and pleasure with Araminta. In short, the company left me there, and I did not take my leave till a full half hour after they were gone. I think that was as much as decency and good breeding could expect; to be sure Araminta took it in that light, and was vastly obliged to me. 'Tis enough to bring her into fashion again, and I may take my leave as soon as I please, without fear of reproaches. Now, Madam, that is my way of behaving. A woman's reputation is as dear to me as my own; nay, I'll tell you more; I would even make a sacrifice of my vanity to preserve her fame. The greatest misfortune that can befall a lady, that loves to have followers, is to be forsaken; now I never forsake any. I oblige them to turn me off; and for their sake I act the inconsolable. I have sometimes shut myself up to give her all the honour of breaking our commerce. So that you see, charming Lucilia, that all men are not so bad as what is said, and that some have both principles and morals.

Lucilia, who had only read old romances, was not accustomed to this modern stile, and her surprise encreased at every word she heard. What, Sir, said she, is that what you call morals and principles? Yes, Madam, but I confess that they are but seldom met with; and that is the reason of the singular attention that is paid to me; which, to be sure, does no great honour to most of our young folks. And, upon my honour, the more I think of it, the more I could wish, for your advantage, that you would fix upon such a one as me. I flatter myself, said Lucilia, that
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you would have as great a consideration for me, as for another; and that at least I should not be in the situation of a forsaken mistress—All that, Madam, is mere joke; but what is very serious, is that you deserve to have a man of sense, who is convinced of the qualifications of your heart and mind, which I so plainly discover in you; and who knows how to value them as he ought. Lisiere, to be sure, is a very honest worthy man, but he is not of a cast to captivate a wife; and really in general the desire of pleasing a husband, is not so vehement, as to be at the trouble of appearing amiable but to a certain degree. Happily for you, he leaves you at your liberty; and 'tis your fault, if you do not make advantage of his judicious behaviour, in losing the precious moments of your life in dissipation and indolence. I am not afraid, said Lucilia, to fall into either of these extremes—Yet you know, Madam, that nothing is more common.—Yes, I do, Sir, and that is the very reason, why I should be so difficult in my choice, if ever I make one; for I have no notion of an attachment, that is not to last for ever—What, Lucilia! at your time of day, can you think of a never-ceasing constancy? If I really thought that you was in earnest, I believe that I should be capable of committing a folly.—And what folly, pray?—Why to be prudent, and settle for ever.—Do you seriously think that you could have the resolution to do it?—Faith, Madam, if I must speak the truth, I am afraid I should.—That is a very odd declaration.—I own, Madam, 'tis odd enough; but then I hope you will excuse me, as it is the first of that sort I ever made in my life.—The first do you say!—Yes, the first; for till now, the ladies were so good as to save me the trouble

trouble of making advances; but I find I grow oldish.—Well, Sir, for the rarity of the thing, I forgive this your first essay; nay more, I own I am pleased with it.—That is happy indeed! and so, Madam, you suffer me to love you; but do you intend to do me the honour of returning the compliment?—That is at present out of the question. Time and experience will inform me whether you deserve it.—Pray look at me, Lucilia.—I do look at you.—What, and don't you laugh?—Laugh, at what?—Why at your own answer: Do you take me then for a simpleton?—In what?—In talking reason to you.—Was it then to talk reason to me that you favoured me with this tête-à-tête?—I did not know, Sir, that to act reasonably, there was any necessity for witnesses. And after all, what have I said, but what you must naturally have expected? I see that you have wit and comeliness joined to an air of distinction.—You are mighty condescending.—But all that is not sufficient, to deserve my confidence and fix my inclinations.—Not sufficient, Madam! excuse the little I have; and pray let me know what you would have more to be satisfied.—A greater knowledge of your character, and a more certain persuasion of your sentiments in regard to me.—I promise you nothing, nor interdict myself any thing. You may hope for all, but you have no pretensions. 'Tis your business to consult with yourself, whether this suits you or not. Charming Lucilia! nothing ought to seem hard in striving to deserve and please you. But in good faith, would you have me renounce all that is agreeable in the world, to make my happiness depend on an uncertain hereafter? I am, you know it, and I may say it, the man perhaps in
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all France the most courted; whether through taste or caprice 'tis no matter. Sure it is, that they all would fain have me, was it for ever so short a time.—You are in the right, Sir, I was very unjust, and your moments are too precious.—No, I honestly own to you, that I am tired of being in the mode. I sought for an object fit to fix me. I have found one, and I attach myself to it. Can any thing be more fortunate? But then, my attachment must not be in vain. You say you want time to consider, I gave you four and twenty hours; surely that's enough. I never gave half so much before. That is very generous, reply'd Lucilia, but my reflections are slow and you are too much in a hurry for us to settle matters. I am young, and perhaps have sensibility; but neither my youth nor my sensibility shall ever make me take an imprudent step. I have told you already, that if ever I dispose of my heart, it must be the consequence of time, experience, reflection, and the sweet conviction of confidence and esteem, that must determine it.—Do you really then, Madam, fancy that you have found an amiable man so disemployed as to have leisure to spin out an intrigue? And yourself, do you intend to pass your youth in considering whether you shall love or not? I can't tell, answered Lucilia, whether I ever may be in love, nor how much time I may take in that resolution; but that time will be well employed, if it saves me from repentance. I admire you, Madam, very much admire you, said Blamzé, as he rose to take his leave, but I have not the honour to be enrolled amongst the ancient chivalry; you may seek elsewhere for a knight errant, for I really did not wait on you so soon this morning
with

with any intention to compose a romance with you.

Lucilia, amazed at this scene, passed quickly from surprize to reflection. Is this, said she, the man so much in vogue? The manly excellence! He deigns to think me pretty; and if he thought me capable of constancy, he should be weak enough to love me! and yet he won't allow me time to consult my heart; I must seize the very moment that he likes me, and take my resolution in a few hours, more than he ever bestowed on any one before. Thus it is that women vilify themselves, and give the men an opportunity of usurping their power! By good luck he has discovered himself. What presumption and self-sufficiency were hid under that mask of modesty that deceived me? Ah! I see that the most mortifying misfortune that can happen to a woman, is to be in love with a fop.

That evening, after the opera, Lucilia's society being met, Plombac whispered to her with an air of mystery, that neither Blamzé nor Clairfons were to sup with her. 'Tis very well, said she, I don't desire an assiduity from my friends that would give them the least constraint; there are even some people, whose assiduity would be very troublesome to me. If Blamzé is one of that number, answered Plombac, with great ingenuity, Clairfons has delivered you from him for some time.—What do you mean?—Don't be alarmed, every thing has passed very well.—What has passed, Sir?—Why, when the curtain was dropped at the end of the opera, we went on the stage, and, as usual, were listening to Blamzé's decisions. After having given his opinion on the music, dancing and decorations, he asked whether we supped with the little marchioness

ness (I ask pardon, madam; but it was of you he spoke). We answered, yes. I shan't be there, said he, for we pout ever since morning. I enquired on what occasion. Blamzé then related how you had given him a rendezvous, that he had disappointed you, and that you were very angry; but that was all was cleared up this morning; that you acted very childishly, that he had pressed you to come to the point; but that you required time to reflect, and that tired with your *buts* and your *ifs*, he had left you where he found you. He likewise said that you must needs begin with a serious attachment; that he had almost a mind to it, but really that he had not so much time to spare. For in calculating the strength of the fort, he thought it might sustain a siege, and that for his part he was only fit for a surprize. 'Tis an exploit worthy of young folks, added he; you are, at that time of day, when obstacles are only inducements to overcome them. But I give you warning, that virtue is her stronghold, and sensibility her weak side. I was sure of success, if I could but have submitted to act the passionate lover. I was very sure, continued Plombac, that what he said was all invention. But I had prudence enough not to take it up. Clairfons, who was not so discreet, told him, that he did not believe that there was a single word of truth in all he had said, upon which they went out together. I followed them; Clairfons received a wound—And Blamzé—Blamzé has two, which are thought dangerous. Whilst I helped him into his chariot, if Clairfons, said he, knows how to make a right use of this adventure, Lucilia is at his command; a woman makes but a poor defence against a man who has defended her so well. Tell him I dispense with his

keeping it a secret. 'Tis but just that she should know how much she is obliged to her knight.

Lucilia had much ado to hide the confusion and fright this description threw her in. She feigned a head-ach, and every body knows that a fine lady's head-ach is a polite manner of bidding the company take their leave; she was left to herself as soon as supper was over.

Lucilia was in the utmost consternation. She could not reconcile it to herself to have been the cause of a duel, which must necessarily make her the town talk. She was much moved at the warmth with which Clairfons had resented her injury; but what an humiliation, if this adventure should make a noise, and come to her husband's knowledge! Happily the affair was kept secret. Plombac and Clairfons made it a point not to expose Lucilia's reputation. And when Blamzé was recovered, he took great care not to boast of an imprudence for which he had been so deservedly punished. It may be asked, perhaps, how a man till then, so very discreet, ceased to be so all at once? The reason is, that one is much less tempted to reveal the favours we receive, than to be revenged of the rigours we experience. This first indiscretion nearly cost him his life. As for Clairfons, he was soon cured; and Lucilia received him with a certain tenderness unknown to him before. If it be natural to have a regard for those who have exposed their lives for us; 'tis as natural to have a regard for them in whose cause they were exposed; and such services are often stronger motives of attachment for those who rendered them, than for those who received them. No wonder then that Clairfons became most desperately in love with Lucilia; but

but the more she was indebted to him, the less he presumed for marks of her gratitude. He felt an inconceivable pleasure, in thinking of his generous proceeding, which he must renounce, if he took advantage of the right he had acquired of Lucilia's acknowledgments; so that he was more timorous than if he had deserved nothing at all. But Lucilia read in his soul, and the delicacy of his sentiments, gained her inclination. But, however, the apprehension of not shewing her gratitude, or the fear of carrying it too far, made her dissemble the knowledge she had, by what Plombac had informed her of; so that the regard she had for Clairfons, seeming free and disinterested, made him the more sensible of it. Their mutual inclination increased every day. They sought for each other, conversed with intimacy, and listened with complaisance; they gave one another an account of what they had done, and all this without affectation, as if only by way of discourse; but with such exactness, that they knew to a minute the hour they were to meet again. By degrees Clairfons became more familiar and Lucilia less reserved. There wanted nothing now but an explanation. And in order to bring that about, there was no occasion for those wonderful incidents that love procures for timorous lovers. One day, as they were alone, Lucilia dropt her fan; Clairfons took it up and presented it to her. She received it with a sweet smile; the smile gave her lover the boldness to kiss her hand, which was one of the handsomest in the world. Soon as his lips were applied to it, the attraction was so great, that there was no getting them from it. Lucilia, in her emotion, endeavoured softly to withdraw it; he opposed her with a gentle violence; and his eyes tenderly

fixed on those of Lucilia, disarmed her entirely. Their looks had explained their thoughts before their voice was of the party. So that the mutual declaration of their passion for each other was afterwards made in a very few words. O let me enjoy the thought, we love one another! cry'd Clairfons, intoxicated with joy.—Yes, we love one another, answered Lucilia, with a sigh, there is no disowning it now; but remember that I am bound by the strictest ties of duty; ties that are inviolable, and will, if you have any regard for me, be sacred to you.

Lucilia's inclination was not like our modern love, that banishes all modesty so soon as the passion is formed; and then Clairfons respected her too much to take any advantage of her weakness. Delighted to be beloved, he limited his desires at first, in the possession of a heart pure, faithful, and virtuous. How little do they love, cry'd he, in his delirium, who are not content with the happiness of loving? Who was the first savage that gave the name of rigour, to that resistance which a timorous modesty opposes to a brutal passion? Can there be a refusal, charming Lucilia, that your eyes do not soften? Can I have reason to complain when you smile upon me? And have I a wish to form, when my eyes catch from yours that heavenly voluptuousness that absorbs my senses? Far be from us those tumultuous pleasures followed by regrets, which would interrupt the sweet serenity of your life. I respect your virtue as much as you cherish it, and I should never forgive myself to have given room for remorse in the bosom of innocence. Such heroic sentiments enchanted Lucilia, and Clairfons every day growing more tender, was every day more and more beloved. But after all these
fine

fine resolutions, the banters of his friends, and some suspicions they raised concerning that virtue he so much adored, embittered his happiness. He became melancholy and uneasy; every thing importuned him, every thing increased his jealousy. Lucilia felt each day her chains grow closer and heavier, each day new complaints were heard, new reproaches made. Every man that was received with any politeness, was a rival that must be banished.

The first sacrifices he exacted were granted without resistance. He required others, he obtained them; he wanted still more, when at last she was tired with complying. Clairfons thought he perceived clearly in Lucilia's impatience, a visible attachment to all those connections to which he shewed his dislike; and that love, which was at first so delicate and submissive, became savage and tyrannical. Lucilia was alarmed at it, she endeavoured to appease him, but all in vain. I shall never believe, said Clairfons imperiously, I shall never believe that you love me, if you do not live for me alone, as I do for you. If I possess, and am sufficient for your heart, what have you to do with an importunate world? Why should you think it hard to turn away whatever is disagreeable to me? Should I be uneasy at renouncing any thing you should dislike? Nay, more, is it not a continual violence on myself, to see any thing that is not Lucilia? Would to heaven that I was delivered of that crowd which besieges you, and that rob me every instant of one of your looks or thoughts! The solitude which startles you would be my greatest joy. Are not our souls alike in nature? The love you fancy you feel, is it not the same as that I feel? You complain that I require of you such and such sacrifices. Exact from me, Lucilia, ex-

and in your turn; put me to the severest, most disagreeable trials, you will see whether I shall hesitate a moment. There is no connection I would not break, no effort but what I would make, or rather I should make none at all; the pleasure of conforming to your desire would make me ample amends, and be all in all to me; and what is called deprivation would be to me enjoyment. You fancy so, Clairfons, answered ingenuously the tender Lucilia, but you deceive yourself. Each particular divesture would be of little consequence, but all together a very great one. It is the continuance of them that is tiresome, and you have made experience that there is no complaisance, let it be ever so great, but what may be exhausted. Whilst she thus argued, Clairfons's eyes sparkling with vexation, were by turns cast up to heaven, or fixed on her. Believe me, continued Lucilia, the sacrifices of true love are made in the heart under a mysterious veil; 'tis self-love that must have them public and solemn; 'tis not enough to be victorious, it aspires to the honour of a triumph, and that is what you demand.

What a cold analysis! what a metaphysical description! is that the reasoning of love? I love you, Madam, nothing is more true, to my misfortune be it said, I'd sacrifice a thousand lives to please you; and whatever that sentiment is, that you call self-love, it would detach me from the whole universe to live alone for you; but when I give up all, I expect to possess you in the like manner. Cleon, Linval, Plombac, all that may make me uneasy, and I cannot answer for myself. After what I declare, if you love me, my quiet must be dear to you; and though my uneasiness be a folly, 'tis your business to dispel it.

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Did I say a folly? No, no, your behaviour gives but too just grounds for my suspicions and alarm. And how can I possibly be unconcerned, when I see you concerned for all about you more than for me?

Ah! Sir, how much am I obliged to you, said Lucilia sighing; you open my eyes on the brink of an abyss, into which love was near precipitating me. I am now convinced that there is no slavery to be compared to that which a jealous lover imposes.—I, Madam, enslave you! have not you an absolute empire over me? and don't you dispose of—Enough, Sir, I have suffered a long time; I had flattered myself, but you have broke the charm by which I was deluded, and no power on earth can ever bring me back. Be my friend, if you can, for it is the only title that you can assume with me.—O cruel Lucilia! will you then be my death?—No, all I want is to establish your quiet, and my own.—You distract me, what is my crime?—Too, too much love for yourself, and too little esteem for me.—O, I swear—Don't swear; your jealousy is a voice innate; 'tis your nature, and nature never alters. I know you thoroughly; and the minute I begin to fear, I cease to love. I see that at present my frankness is irksome; but of two torments I choose that which is the shortest; for in depriving you of a right to be jealous, I reduce you to the happy necessity of ceasing to be so. And I, reply'd Clairfons, with a stifled resentment, know you likewise; the scrupulous delicacy of a feeling soul is incompatible with the lightness of such a one as your's; you want a Blamzé for a lover, and I was very weak indeed to be his hinderance. Hold, interrupted Lucilia, I am very sensible of the obligations I owe you;

but I retire to save you the confusion of having reproached me with them.

Clairfons withdrew in a fury, fully resolved never to see again one that he had so tenderly loved, and that dismissed him with so much inhumanity.

Lucilia, restored to herself, found that she was eased of a burden, under which she was ready to sink. But then, on one side, the dangers of love, which she had escaped, and, on the other, the dismal perspective of an eternal indifference, placed nothing in her future view but cruel uneasiness, or dull, tiresome, insipid hours. What! said she, did heaven bestow upon me a heart of sensibility, only to make it the sport of a sop, the victim of a tyrant, or the melancholy companion of a kind of philosopher, that nothing affects, that nothing moves! These reflections plunged her into a thoughtfulness she could no longer hide; and they who frequented her, began to catch her uneasiness. The ladies especially took the alarm. She is gone, said they, if we don't find some means to take her off the terrible situation she is in; she is quite disgusted with the world, and nothing pleases her now but retirement; the symptoms of her melancholy grow every day more and more alarming; and without some new agreeable passion to animate her, it is to be feared she will fall again under the authority of a husband. Do we know of nobody that could give a turn to her young imagination? Even Blamzé miscarried; and as for Clairfons, on whom we depended, he is a mere fool, that loves like a fool; there is no wonder that she was tired of him. Let us see, said Cephisa, after having paused a while, there is something romantic in Lucilia's character; she must be actuated

tuated by uncommon, fairy adventures; and there is the magnificent Dorimon, who is the very thing for our purpose. She will be quite mad of him; only let us strive to engage her to sup at his delightful country-house. I'll take upon me to prepare him, and give him the hint; the affair was settled, and Dorimon apprised of it.

There was nobody in all Paris who knew better than Dorimon, where the most ingenious artists were to be found; nobody received them with more politeness, nor rewarded them with more generosity; so that he had gained the title of connoisseur, and the reputation of a man of taste.

If it so chances that this tale should be read in some future ages, it will be thought the work of imagination, for the place I am about to describe would certainly be taken for the enchanting palace of some fairy. But it is no fault of mine, that the luxury and extravagance of our times outdo the marvellous of all that was ever invented; and that the description of our follies, though very true, has not the appearance of truth.

On the rich and smiling banks of the Seine, a rising ground, in form of an amphitheatre, opens to the first dawn of Aurora, and to the warm beams of the south. A beautiful grove screens it from the chilling blast of the north, and from the moist influence of the west. From the top of the hill there fell in gurgling cascades three different abundant sources of a pure stream as clear as crystal; the hand of industrious art conducted them thither in a thousand serpentine revolutions on the verdant bank. Sometimes the waters divide, forming little islands, then re-unite into spacious basons, where the sky seems pleased to be reflect-

ed; then precipitately dash themselves amongst rocks and grottoes, where art has imitated the various frolics of nature. The Seine, that winds at the bottom of the hill, receives them in her tranquil current; these falling waters put me in mind of those fabulous times, when the Naiads of the fountain plunged into the humid palaces of the river deities, to cool the ardors of love and youth.

An ingenious caprice seems to have laid out the gardens watered by these streams. Every particular part of this agreeable picture agrees without a repetition, the symmetry of the whole is charming; you carry your looks every where without trouble, and you repose yourself without being tired. A noble elegance, a magnificence without extravagance; a bold, yet delicate taste, have embellished those delightful grounds; you see nothing neglected, nothing trimmed with too much art. The assemblage of natural beauties is its chiefest ornament; and the exact proportion of the groupes, joined to the variety of forms, produces that sweet harmony which so much pleases the eye. Arbours adorned with statues, lattice-work in different shapes, are the decorations of the most admired gardens; but too often such beauties, display'd without taste and knowledge, only excite a momentary cold applause. Here the order and union of all the different parts make of a thousand agreeable sensations one continued delightful whole. The second object you discover, adds to the pleasure of the first, and both acquire new beauties by the charms of another object that succeeds, without surpassing them.

This delicious landskip is terminated by a palace almost of an aerian architecture; the Corinthian

ionian order has much less elegance and lightness. I shall not attempt to describe the beauties of the edifice, nor talk of columns, architraves, frises, cornices, and so forth; suppose, as it is true, that every part was constructed with elegance and propriety.

The furniture of the apartments answered the magnificence of the building. 'Twas the temple of arts and taste. All that the pencil, the chissel, the burin could possibly perform with the utmost perfection; all that industry has invented for the pleasures of life, were display'd with a well judg'd profusion; and voluptuousness, daughter of wealth, pleas'd the soul through all the senses.

Lucilia was astonished at so much magnificence; the first evening seem'd as a dream; it was a succession of entertainments of all kinds, which she plainly perceived were dedicated to her. The eagerness, vivacity and gallantry with which Dorimon did the honours of this beautiful place, the changing of the scenes which he produced only with a look, the absolute empire that he seem'd to have over arts and pleasures, all these recalled to Lucilia's mind what she had read of the most celebrated enchanters. She durst not trust to her eyes, and thought that she herself was enchanted: If Dorimon had taken advantage of her intoxication, perhaps the dream might have ended like a modern romance. But Dorimon was merely gallant; and all that he presumed to desire was, that Lucilia would now and then, when agreeable, do him the honour to embellish his hermitage, for so he call'd his magnificent habitation.

Lucilia's companions had observed all her motions. Those that were the most knowing thought,
that

that Dorimon was too much taken up with his grandeur, and too little with his happiness. He should have seized the first moment of her surprise; 'tis an ecstasy that is never felt a second time.

Nevertheless Lucilia, her head full of what she had seen, looked upon Dorimon in a very advantageous light. So much gallantry indicated a lively and brilliant imagination, a genius cultivated, and a refined taste, and a lover, if ever he should prove to be one, wholly employed in his care to please. This portrait, though flattered, was not unlike. Dorimon was still young, his figure far from displeasing, and his temper cheerful and agreeable. As for his wit, it was nothing but spurts; his sentiments had little warmth, and much finesse. Nobody said more polite things, but he had not the gift of persuasion; one liked to hear him, but nobody gave credit to what he said. He was the most bewitching man in the world for a coquette, and the least dangerous for a woman that had any sentiments.

Lucilia consented to make him a second visit, and it was again new diversions, new entertainments. But in vain Dorimon's gallantry had assembled all the pleasures imaginable that she inspired! in vain those pleasures were varied every hour with so much taste and art! Lucilia was at first entertained, but soon was satisfied, and before night she was convinced that one may be fatigued in so delightful a place. Dorimon, who never quitted her, put all his talents at work in hopes of pleasing; he made her a thousand fine speeches, and mixed them with something tender; but still that was not what she had imagined. She expected to have met with a deity, and Dorimon was but a mortal; the splendour of his

his palace grew tarnished, the proportions were not observed; and Dorimon, whilst he was out-doing himself, was still inferior to the idea that all about him had raised.

He was far from imagining, tho' disadvantageous for him, the comparison was in Lucilia's mind, and he only waited for a happy opportunity to complete his triumph. After the concert, and before supper, he led her, as if by mere chance, into a solitary closet, where she might retire when she chose to be by herself. Lucilia entered the room, and she sees her image repeated on every side in the brilliant walls of looking-glass; the most voluptuous pictures interspersed were likewise multiplied. Lucilia imagined, as she beheld herself, that she saw the goddess of love. At so charming an exhibition, a cry of surprize and admiration escaped her; and Dorimon laid hold of that sudden emotion. Be here a queen, this is your throne, said he, shewing her a sofa, that some divinity had strew'd with flowers. My throne, reply'd Lucilia, setting herself upon it with great gaiety: I think it becomes me, and I reign here over a sett of very pretty subjects; she meant the little Cupids and Graces that were represented in different parts, multiplied in the pier-glasses. Will you deign to admit me as one of your subjects? said Dorimon, with some ardour, kneeling to her. As for you, Sir, said she, very gravely, I can't look upon you as one of the children I behold. Saying this, she was rising from the sofa, but he boldly retained her; and the struggle she made to break from him, only rendered him more audacious. Where am I, said she, with wild affright? Leave me, I say, leave me this moment,
said

said she, in a resolute tone, or my cries—At these words he himself was confounded: pardon me, Madam, if I am guilty of some imprudence, of which you are in some degree the cause. Retire with me; here *tête-à-tête* indulge on that settee. Is not that giving a hint, according to the established mode, that one would not be displeased at a little violence! But I find that we did not understand one another, and that you are quite of another way of thinking.—Quite of another way, indeed, Sir, answered Lucilia, bolting out of the closet; whilst Dorimon followed, not a little confounded at his mistake. It was very happy that the little time they were absent from the company could give no grounds for scandal. Lucilia put on an air of satisfaction to hide her confusion, and said that she had been viewing a closet very well worth seeing. The whole company rush'd into it, and their admiration and applause were only interrupted, by letting them know that supper was served.

The expensive sumptuosity of this entertainment seemed to surpass all the pleasures they had tasted before; but Dorimon strove in vain to be himself, his natural cheerfulness was gone; and Lucilia returned no answer to all the pretty things that were said to draw her from her reverie, but a forced smile, with which good breeding endeavours to disguise ill humour.

Now this is the very man, said her acquaintances to her, as they retired together, the very man that is fit for you; with him life would be a continual enchantment. One would almost imagine that the Pleasures and Graces are subservient to him, and that at his word of command they croud to obey his orders.

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There are some people, reply'd Lucilia coldly, that are not to be controul'd; despising grandeur and wealth, know no other riches but what every body finds in their own breast. Indeed, my dear friend, said Cephisa, you are too difficult to please. Yes, Madam, I own I am difficult, answered Lucilia with a sigh; and during the rest of their journey she did not utter a word. As soon as they parted with her, is she not, said they, a pretty agreeable might-have-been? If her whims were entertaining, one might be amused with them; but can there be any thing more dull and insipid? To be sure it was worth while to be separated from a husband to be a prude to every body else!

Thus spoke her what-you-call friends; and Lucilia, on her side, had other reflections. Is this, said she, what the world so much commended and admired? I have cursorily run over all that is looked upon as most agreeable. What have I found? A fop, a jealous man, and another, who being very rich, attributes to himself, as so many personal charms, his palace, his gardens, and his entertainments; and upon that presumption, imagines that there is no virtue, be it ever so strict, but what would be glad to yield. Oh! how I hate those compilers of romances, that turn my brain with their fables! My imagination full of their chimeras, made me look upon my husband as an insipid, dull creature; and yet he deserves to be loved more, much more, than all I have seen. He has a natural simplicity in his temper; but is not that infinitely to be preferred before the impertinent airs and pretensions of a Blamzé? He is even, constant, and tranquil in his inclinations; what would be my fate, if he was violent

violent and furious in his passion like a Clairfons. He did not love me with great ardour, but then he loved nobody else; and had I been wise, he loved enough to have made me happy. I did not taste with him those noisy fastuous pleasures that enhance at first, and soon disgust. But his complaisance, his goodness, his great attention, procured me constantly more pure and solid joys, had I known how to taste them. Fool that I was! I ran after illusions, and fled from happiness itself; which resides in the silence of passion, in the equilibrium and quietness of the mind. But alas! is it now time to confess my errors, when they have deprived me of the friendship, the confidence, and perhaps the esteem of my husband? Thank heaven, I have nothing to reproach myself with, but the imprudences of youth. But is Lisiere obliged to take my word for it? And will he vouchsafe to listen to me? How difficult it is to return to one's duty, when once it has been forsaken! But where lies the difficulty? What retains me? Is it the fear of being humbled? Lisiere is a worthy, honest man; and if he has had a regard for me, even in my follies, will he depress me when I am recovered from them? All that I have to do is, to detach myself from a vain, pernicious society, and live with such friends as my husband likes and respects; such as I may see without a blush. So long as he has seen me mad after the world, he has never approached me. But when he sees me retired from it, perhaps he may vouchsafe to recal me to him; and if I cannot regain his heart, I shall have the comfort at least of being worthy of it; and be reconciled to myself, though I have not the happiness of being reconciled to my husband.

Lisiere,

Lisere, with great anguish, had never lost sight of her in the giddy tumult of the world in which she was engaged : he depended on her good sense, and on her uprightness of heart. She will find out, said he, the nothingness of all those empty pleasures, the folly of women, the vanity of men, and the falsehood of them all ; and if she returns virtuous, and I don't doubt but she will, her virtue will be still more dear to her for the hazard it has run. But has she escaped all the dangers with which she was surrounded, the charms of flattery, the snares of seduction, the enchantments of voluptuousness ? We despise the world when we are well acquainted with it ; but you give yourself up to it before you know its deceit ; and very often the heart is bewildered before reason comes to its aid. O Lucilia ! he cry'd, looking tenderly on his wife's picture, which was the only pleasure he tasted in his retirement. O Lucilia ! you were so worthy to be happy, and I flattered myself that you would be so with me ! Alas ! perhaps, one of those handsome deluders, that are the ornament and bane of the world, is now actually endeavouring to seduce her innocence, and obstinately strives to compass her undoing, only to have the pleasure of boasting of it. Ah ! cruel thought, my wife's dishonour would separate us for ever ! and I must no longer hope to live with her, whom death alone ought to have divided me from ! I have betray'd her in leaving her to herself. I was chosen by heaven to be the guide and guardian of her inconsiderate youth ; and I consulted nothing but custom, and only was struck at the frightful idea of being looked upon as her tyrant.

Whilst Lisere floated to and fro in this terrible uncertainty, Lucilia was not less agitated between the

the desire of returning to him, and the fear of being rejected. Many a time, after having passed the night in sighs and tears, she has got up, with a full resolution to go and wait for his rising, throw herself at his feet, and ask his pardon. But a certain shame, so well known to a feeling and delicate soul, retained her from going. If Lisiere did not despise her, if he had still for her the least sensibility, the least esteem, why has he never once vouchsafed to see her ever since she had broke from her society, and lived retired? Every day as he passed by her apartment, she heard him enquire *how does your Lady do?* She would have Lisiere acquainted with her repentance, and the recovery of herself; but whom shall I trust to? said she; to some friend? But where to find one prudent and discreet enough for so delicate an interposition? One may have capacity, but not zeal enough; another may have zeal and want capacity; and then how very hard it is to confide in others what you have not the courage to trust to one's self! What if I should write? But what can I say? And then words will have little effect, and details are so mortifying! At last a thought came into her head, that satisfied both her delicacy and her sensibility. Lisiere was gone for two days into the country, and she took the opportunity of his absence to put her scheme in execution.

Lisiere had an old domestic that Lucilia perceived to be much concerned when she and her husband parted, whose zeal, fidelity and discretion she could depend on. Ambrose, said she, I have a piece of service for you to do for me. Ah! madam, answered the good man, order what you please, I am entirely at your command; would to God that you and my master loved one another as much as I love you both! I don't know which
of

of you is in the wrong, but I am sure I pity you both. What a delight it was to see you together! I see here nothing now but what afflicts me, since you and my master are fallen out. Perhaps, answered Lucilia, a little abashed, 'tis my fault; but, honest Ambrose, I hope the ill is not without a remedy; only to do what I shall tell you. You know that my picture is in your master's apartment?—Yes, yes, Madam, and so does my master know it; for sometimes he shuts himself up with it for whole days; 'tis all his comfort; he gazes upon it, talks to it, and sighs enough to break one's heart to hear him; and I am very sure he had much rather entertain himself with you than with your resemblance.—You inform me, Ambrose, of what gives me great comfort. Go and privately take down the picture, and bring it into my chamber, without any body's knowing of it.—I, Madam! what, would you have me deprive my master of all that is dear to him in the world? O! rather ask for my life. Don't be alarm'd, reply'd Lucilia, it is not my design to deprive him of it. To-morrow in the evening you shall take it back, and hang it up again where it was. I only desire the favour of you not to mention a word of it to my husband. Well, with all my heart, said Ambrose; I know that you are goodness itself, and will not in my old age let me have the grief to have vexed my master.

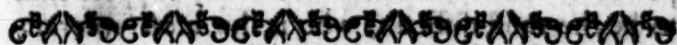
The faithful Ambrose executed her desire; Lucilia's picture had that tender languishing air which was natural to her; but her look was serene, and her head dressed with flowers. She sent for a painter, and ordered him to alter the picture, and represent her with hair dishevell'd, and tears trickling from her eyes. As soon as he had executed what she desired, the picture was hung in

Lisiere's

Lisiere's apartment, where it was before. At his return he look'd up as usual to the beloved object. You may easily guess at his surprize. The dishevell'd hair struck him at first sight, but on a nearer approach he saw the tears falling from her eyes. Ah! he cry'd, ah, Lucilia! are they the tears of repentance? Is it the grief of love? He flies transported to her apartment, and finds her in the same situation as she was represented in the portrait. Motionless a while he tenderly gazed upon her; then rushing suddenly to her, oh! is it really true, said he, that I have found my wife again! Yes, said Lucilia, still in tears, she is yours, if you think her worthy of it. Can she have ceased being so, replied Lisiere, pressing her to his bosom? No, my dear Lucilia, be not alarmed; I know your very soul, and I have never ceased pitying nor esteeming you. You would never have come back had the world seduced you; your voluntary return is a proof of your virtue. O! heaven be praised, said she (her heart eased by the tears that flowed abundantly from her eyes) heaven be praised I have had no disgraceful weakness to be ashamed of. I was giddy, but I was virtuous. If I had the least doubt of it, said Lisiere, should I hold you in my arms? And at these words — But who can describe the transports of two tender hearts, which after having suffered by a cruel separation, are re-united for ever. At hearing of their reconciliation, the whole family was in a rapture of joy; and good old Ambrose cry'd out with tears in his eyes, God be praised, I shall die content!

From that day forward their tender union served for an example to all young people of their age. Their separation convinced them that there was nothing in the world that could compensate
for

for the loss of one another, and therefore I have called it a **HAPPY DIVORCE.**



THE GOOD HUSBAND.

FELISOND, one of those good fathers of a family, who puts us in mind of the golden age, had married his only daughter Hortensia to the baron of Valsain, and his niece Amelia to the president of Lusane.

Valsain, a man of gallantry and politeness, without any great attention, sufficiently tender and affectionate without jealousy, too much taken up about his own reputation and advancement, to be very watchful over his wife, left her in full confidence upon her own credit, to enjoy the dissipation of the world, in which he mixed himself, and was pleased to see her make an agreeable figure. Lusane, more considerate, and more assiduous, liv'd only for Amelia, who had a reciprocal affection for him. The mutual desire of pleasing was their whole study, and to them the most sacred of duties, was the sincerest and sweetest of pleasures.

Old Felisond was delighted in the union of his family, till the death of Amelia and Valsain put an end to his happiness, and overwhelm'd him in sorrow and mourning. Lusane, to add to his distress, had not even the comfort of being a father; Valsain left Hortensia two children, with but a very inconsiderable provision. At first the young widow was wholly taken up with lamentations for her husband, but however we strive to forget ourselves, we recur thither insensibly. The time of mourning, was the time of reflection.

A young

A young woman at Paris, who is of a gay disposition, is above censure only while she is in the power of her husband. We readily suppose him to be the most difficult, who is the most interested, and what he approves, who has a right to condemn? But when left entirely to herself, she enters again under the inspection of a severe and jealous public, and at the age of two and twenty, widowhood is by no means a state of liberty. Hortensia soon saw, that she was too young to depend solely upon herself, and Felisond observed it still stronger. This good father one day communicated his fears to his nephew Lufane. My dear friend, says he, you are much to be pitied, but I am infinitely more so, I have but one daughter, you know how I love her, and you know the dangers she must be subject to. The world, which has already gain'd too much upon her, calls her back to it, and I am afraid, old as I am, that I shall live to blush with shame. My daughter in herself is virtuous at heart, but our virtue is in ourselves, and our honour, our honour which we hold so dear, in the opinion of others.—I understand you, and to speak freely, I partake of your uneasiness. But could we not influence Hortensia to some new engagement?—Alas! my friend, how many reasons might she alledge against it? two children, two children, unprovided for, without fortunes! For you know, I am in no great circumstances, and their father was ruin'd.—No matter, Sir, consult Hortensia, I know a man, if agreeable to her, who has a good understanding, and a heart capable of being of service to her children. The good old gentleman thought he understood him. O Lufane! says he, thou who wast the happiness of my niece Amelia, thou whom I love as my own son, Lufane, heaven

ven reads in my heart. . . But tell me, the husband whom you propose for her, does he know my daughter? Is he not afraid of her youth, her levity, and the gay life she has led in the polite world?—He knows her intimately as yourself, and regards her with equal esteem. Felisond did not delay speaking to his daughter. Yes, Sir, I confess to you, said she, my situation is delicate. To be always observant over one's self, to be in continual fear, to be in the world as before our judge, is the necessary lot of widows at my age; it is indeed both painful and dangerous.—Well then, daughter, Lusane has been talking to me of a husband for you, who will perfectly suit you.—Lusane! Ah my father would that he could find me one, who resembled himself. Happy as I was with Valsain, I could not help now and then envying the fortune of his lady. The father, in raptures at her answer, went to report it immediately to his nephew. If you don't flatter me, says Lusane to him, we shall be all happy to-morrow.—What, my dear friend, was it you?—'Tis I myself.—My heart told me as much.—Yes, Sir, 'tis I who wish to be the comfort of your age, in bringing back to her duty, a daughter that is worthy of you. I perceive that Hortensia, without committing any indecent extravagancies, has taken up all the airs, all the follies of a woman of fashion. The loveliness of her temper, mere whim, and the desire to please and amuse herself, have involved her in the labyrinth of a noisy and trifling society; the business now is to extricate her. For this purpose indeed, a little courage and resolution is necessary, perhaps it will cost me some tears to overcome, and that is too much for a heart of such sensibility as mine. Yet I will answer for myself, but you, Sir, you are her father,

ther, and if Hortensia comes to make her complaints to you—Don't fear, dispose of my daughter as you please, I rely upon your virtue, and if the authority of a husband is insufficient, take that of a parent along with it.

Lufane was received by Hortensia in the most affectionate manner. Think, Sir, says she to him, that you see in me the wife whom you have lost. If I can but replace her in your heart, I shall have nothing to regret.

When the articles were drawing up, Sir, says Lufane to Felisond, don't let us forget that we have two little orphans. Their father's estate did not suffer him to leave them any great fortune, don't let us deprive them of their mother's, and let not the birth of my children be a misfortune to them. The old man was affected, even to tears, with the generosity of his nephew, whom from that moment he called his son. Hortensia was not less sensible of her new husband's proceedings. A genteel, elegant equipage, the richest dresses, the most valuable jewels, an house furnished with taste, where nothing was to be seen which did not bespeak splendour and elegance, sufficiently satisfied the young widow that she had a husband, who was attentive to her pleasures, but the transports which she felt were not of long duration.

When the tumult of the marriage had subsided into a calm, Lufane thought it necessary to explain himself to her upon the plan of life which he intended to pursue. For this serious conversation he chose the morning, the hour of waking, when the silence of the senses leaves reason at its liberty, when the soul itself, refreshed by the sweetness of sleep, seems to spring again into life with pure ideas, and possessing itself entirely, contemplates itself, and reads its own bosom, as one
looks

looks to the bottom of the clear and quiet stream.

My dear Hortensia, says he, I would have you be happy, I would have you be always so; but it will cost you some trifling sacrifices, and I had rather ask them of you thus frankly and openly, than draw you into them by any artifice which might speak distrust. You have passed some agreeable years with the Baron of Valsain; made for the world and its pleasures, young, gay, and dissipated himself, his taste insensibly formed yours. My character is of a graver turn, and my disposition more severe: I cannot adopt his manners, and I think it is a happiness for you. The path you have pursued is spread with flowers, and is full of snares; that which we must walk in has less charms perhaps, but less dangers. The pleasures which encompassed you, would have fled with your youth; the days of serene happiness, which I prepare for you, will be the same at all times. 'Tis not, in the midst of the world, that a woman of honour finds happiness; 'tis in the ordering of her family, in domestic œconomy; 'tis in the love of her duty, in the care of her children, and in the intimate commerce of her society consisting of good people.

This reproof surpriz'd Hortensia, and the word œconomy very much alarmed her ear. But, assuming a tone of pleasantry, by and by perhaps, says she, I may be an excellent œconomist; at present I know nothing of it. My duty is to love you; I fulfill it. My children stand in no need of me, and as for company, you know very well I see only people of fashion and persons of honour.—Don't let us confound, my dearest, your honourable people with your good.—Yes, I understand your distinction; but, in acquaintances, one

ought not to be so difficult. The world, such as it is, amuses me ; and my manner of life has nothing in it incompatible with the decency of your profession. You know I don't wear the long robe, and I can't see why Madam Lufane should be more obliged to make herself miserable than Madam Valfain. Be then, my dear president, as grave as you please ; but suffer your wife to be a little giddy mad-cap for some years longer. Every age will bring its pleasures. 'Tis pity, answered Lufane, you should ever be made serious, your raillery becomes you so agreeably : nevertheless, truth must be spoken. Do you love indiscriminately every thing which composes this world you talk of?—No, not every thing separately ; and of itself ; but the whole, the medley delights me.—What, the slanderers and libertines ? for example,—Even they have their agreeabilities.—Yes, of giving a ridiculous turn to the most simple things, a criminal air to the most innocent, and publishing with exaggeration the follies and extravagancies of those whom they flatter and caress.—'Tis true, at first sight, one is shocked with such characters, but there is very little danger in them at the bottom. When one has scandalized all the world, scandal does no mischief : 'tis a kind of contagion, which wastes itself by spreading.—And those raking fellows, whose very looks insult a woman of reputation, and whose conversation disgraces them, what say you to them ?—One does not believe them.—I will not imitate them, in speaking ill of your sex. There are many amiable and respectable women, I know it ; but there are some,—even as it is with you, a mixture of virtues and vices—Well then, but tell me, What should prevent our making a choice out of this mixture ?—One does chuse, indeed, for our
 inti-

intimates; but in the world one lives with the world.—For my part, my dear, I am determined to live only with such whose morals and characters entitle them to be my friends.—Your friends, Sir, your friends! and how many do we meet with in life?—A great many, when we are worthy of them, and know how to cultivate them. I don't speak of that generous friendship whose devotion extends even to heroism; I call those my friends who come to me with the desire of finding joy and satisfaction, disposed to pardon my foibles, to conceal them from the eyes of the public, to treat me when present with frankness, and when absent with decency. Such friends are not so rare to be found, and I hope I shall have many such. All in good time; we'll make up our familiar acquaintance by and by.—I will not have two sets of acquaintance.—What, Sir, will not your doors be open?—Open to my friends always, come when they will; to them always, I assure you.—No, Sir, I shall not suffer you to disgust the public by offensive distinctions. We may not be in love with the world, but we ought to pay some deference to it, and give into it!—Oh! pray make yourself easy, my dear; that only regards me. They'll say, perhaps, that I am a brute; perhaps that I am jealous: no matter; 'tis of no consequence.—It is of consequence to me. I would have my husband respected, and not have it in his power to reproach me with making him the talk of the world. Make up your society as you please, but permit me to cultivate my old acquaintance, and prevent both the court and the city from railing against you.

Lusane admired the address with which a young woman goes about to defend her liberty. My dear Hortensia, says he, my resolution is not ta-

ken at random ; I have well considered it, believe me, and nothing in the world can alter it. Chuse, among your acquaintance, as many discreet women and worthy men as you please ; my house shall be theirs : but this choice once made, take your leave of all the rest. I will join my friends to yours. A list of both united shall be committed to the hands of the porter, to be his rule for every day ; and if he exceeds it, he shall be dismissed immediately. This is the plan which I propose, and which I wanted to communicate to you.

Hortensia was in the utmost confusion, to see all her fine projects vanished away in a moment. She could not believe that it was Lusane ; that complaisant, mild-tempered Lusane, who had been speaking to her. After all, says she, 'tis fine trusting to men ! What an authority he takes upon him ! In what cool blood he dictates his will and pleasure to me ! See none but women of virtue, and men of character ! a pretty thing indeed ! and then the entertaining society from a circle of respectable friends ! Such is my plan, says he ; as if he need only speak to be obeyed ! See how they restrain us. My cousin was, no doubt, a very good little woman, who would moap as long as you please. She was as happy as a queen, if her husband did but deign to smile, and in transports at a single kiss ; would come boasting to me of her divine man. He thinks, no doubt, that I shall follow her example, and make it my whole care to please him. He is mistaken ; and if he thinks to keep me in leading-strings, he shall find that I am no longer a child.

From this moment instead of that lively, open and engaging air, which she always wore in the company of Lusane, she put on a cold and reserved

ved manner, which, though he plainly perceived, he took no manner of notice of to her. She had taken care to communicate the news of her marriage to that crowd of idle acquaintance who go by the name of friends. They came in shoals to congratulate her, and Lufane was obliged, with her, to return these visits of good breeding, but, even in his politeness, he made such striking distinctions, that it was easy for Hortensia to perceive whom he wished to return his visits.

Olympia was not among this number, a lady who, with a total indifference for the opinion of the world, thinks every thing that pleases must be right, and joins the example to the precept; nor yet Clymene, who does not see why one should make any scruple to change our lovers, when we are tired of the person we have taken, and thinks all timid precautions of secrecy infinitely below a woman of her quality. Nor were these pretty creatures the toilet hunters in the number, who carrying their indolent uselessness about Paris, *Silk worms at morn, and butterflies at night*, pass half their life in having nothing to do, and the other half in doing nothing. Nor those dangling professors of complaisance, who having no personal existence in the world, attach themselves to a pretty woman to be seen in her train, and are content with being humble admirers. Hortensia came home thoughtful and disturbed. She thought she saw the moment which would deprive her of all the happiness of life. Vanity, the taste of pleasure, the love of liberty, all rebelled against the authority her husband wished to assume. Nevertheless, being armed with resolution, she thought better, to dissemble a little a longer, till a better opportunity should happen for declaring herself.

Lufane, next morning, asked her if she had made out her list. No, Sir, says she, I have not, nor do I design it. Here is mine, answered he, without any emotion. See, if in the number of your and my friends, I have forgot any that are agreeable or proper for you.—I have told you, Sir, I don't concern myself with your affairs, and I beg once for all, you will not trouble yourself about mine. If our acquaintance don't agree, let us do as all the world does, let us divide them without any inconvenience. Do you invite whom you please to dinner, I'll ask whom I like to supper.—Ah! my dear Hortensia, how wide is your proposal from my principles; don't think of it, such a custom shall never be established in my house. I'll make it as agreeable to you as possible, but no distinction, if you please, between my friends and yours. To-night all who are contained in the list are expected to sup with you, receive them well I beseech you, and prepare yourself to live in society with them. At these words he retired, leaving the list in the full sight of Hortensia. There, says she, there's his written law fairly penn'd, and running it slightly over, encouraged herself never to comply with it, when the countess of Fierville, an aunt of Valsain's, came to pay her a visit, and found her with tears in her eyes. This haughty woman had contracted a friendship with Hortensia, and as she flattered her inclination, she had gained her confidence. The young lady, whose heart had need of some comfort, told her the cause of her uneasiness. What, cried out the countess, after you have had the folly of marrying beneath yourself, will you dishonour yourself still more? You a slave! and to whom! a lawyer! Consider that you have had the honour to be Madam de Valsain. Hortensia blushed

blushed for her weakness, in having compromised with her husband. Wrong as he may be, I cannot help respecting him; he is the honestest man in the world, and what he has done for my children—Honestest man! and pray who is not? it is a virtue which walks the street, and what has this honest man done so very wonderful for your children? he has not robbed your children of their fortune! He made a fine use indeed of your father's weakness. No, Madam, he has acquired no right to talk to you in the style of a master. Let him preside upon the bench, but leave the government at home to you. At these words, Lusane entered, To me, Madam, said he to her; 'tis neither my wife nor I who am to govern, 'tis reason, and in all probability she would not chuse you for her judge. No, Sir, replied the countess in a most authoritative tone, it belongs not to you to lay down laws for your lady. You have overheard me, and I am glad of it, you know what I think of the folly of your proceedings. If I was as much in the wrong, answered Lusane, as your ladyship seems to think, hard words and reproaches would not set me right. Sweetness and modesty are the arms of your sex, and Hortensia alone has much more power than from your conjunction. Leave the care of our agreeing together to ourselves, since we are to live together. When you have made her duty become odious to her, you cannot give her a dispensation from fulfilling it. When you have made her forfeit the confidence and esteem of her husband, you will not be able to make her amends. Spare your advice, which she neither will nor ought to follow: it might be dangerous to any other, thank heaven, it is only useless to her. Hortensia, added he, as he was going, you will not wish to give me pain, but let

this be a lesson for you. You defend yourself rarely, said Madam de Fierville to Hortensia, who had not even dared to lift up her eyes. Obey, child! obey! It is the property of weak minds. Just Heaven! said she, as she was going out, I am the mildest, most virtuous woman upon earth, but if a husband should dare to treat me so, I would be revenged of him in good earnest. Hortensia had scarce power to rise from her seat to accompany Madam de Fierville, she was in such a trembling and confusion of mind. She perceived the advantage which her imprudence gave her husband; but far from availing himself of it, he did not even reproach her, and his delicacy punished her more feelingly, than his resentment could have done.

In the evening, the guests being assembled, Lufane took the opportunity, when his wife was not yet amongst them. This, says he to them, is the meeting of friendship, if it is agreeable to you, let me see you often, and let us pass our lives together. The general voice of the company was, that they desired nothing better. Here, said he, and presented the good old gentleman Felisond to them, this is our worthy and affectionate father, who will be the soul of our pleasures. At his age, joy has something more sensible, more interesting than in youth, and nothing is more amiable than an agreeable old man. He has a daughter whom I love, and would make happy. Assist me, my friends, to keep her amongst us, and let love, nature, and friendship conspire to make her house more agreeable to her every day. She has some prejudices for the world, natural at her age. But when she shall have tasted the pleasures of virtuous society, the idle world will no longer affect her. While Lufane was speaking,

old

old Felisond could not retrain dropping a tear. O my friend, said he, embracing him, happy is the father, who at his death, can leave his daughter in so good hands!

In a few moments after, Madam Lufane entered the room. The hearts of all the company rejoiced at her sight, but hers was not at ease. She disguised her uneasiness under the reserved air of ceremony, and her politeness, though serious and grave, still appeared amiable and affecting; so much the natural graces enjoy the gift of embellishing every thing.

They played at cards; Lufane observed to Hortensia, that all his company played low; it is the means, says he, of preserving harmony and joy. High gaming pre-occupies and alienates the mind, it hurts those who lose; and imposes the necessity of being serious on those who win, which is inconsistent with unreserved friendship. The supper was elegant. Gaiety and good humour went round the table. The mind and heart were at ease. Their gallantry was such as modesty might smile at, and neither freedom nor decency incommoded each other.

Hortensia, in any other situation, would have relished these calm delights, but the idea of constraint, which she had affixed to them, poisoned all their sweetness.

Next day Lufane was surprised to find her in a more lively and gay disposition; he much doubted that she had taken some new resolution. What is to be done to-day, said he to her? I am going to the play, says she, and I shall return to sup at home. —Very well, and what ladies are you going with? —Two of Valfain's friends, Olympia and Artenice. It is a cruel thing to me, said her husband, to be continually vexing you. But, Hor-

tenfia, why would you expose me? Do you think I am so absurd in the principles I have laid down, that I would consent you should be seen in public with those women?—But you must consent for the party is fix'd, and I cannot fail.—Pardon me, Madam, but you must fail, that you may not be failing to yourself.—Is it failing at all to myself, to see women whom all the world sees?—Yes, it is exposing yourself, to be confounded with them in the opinion of the public.—The public, Sir, is not unjust, and in the world every one answers for themselves.—The public, Madam, supposes with reason, that they who are in a society of pleasures, are social also in their morals; and you ought to have nothing in common with Olympia and Artenice. If you would break with them in decency, there is a method. Disengage yourself from the play, and invite them to supper; my door shall be shut to all my friends, and we will be alone with them. No, Sir, says she, with a little acrimony, I will not abuse your complaisance, and immediately wrote to excuse herself. Nothing ever cost her so much as this note. She washed it with the tears of anger. Most assuredly, said she, I have no great value for these women, the play interests me still less; but to be contradicted in every thing, never to have a will of one's own, to submit always to another's, to hear him dictate his laws with that insulting serenity; 'tis that which distracts me, and makes me capable of every thing.

She was deceived, however, in supposing Lusane's tranquillity had the air of an insult, for it was easy to perceive what a violence he did to himself. His father-in-law, who came to sup with him, perceived his uneasiness. Ah! Sir, said Lusane to him, I feel I have undertaken an engagement

ment very painful for me to perform. He told him all that had passed. Courage, my good friend, says the good father, don't let us give ground; if it pleases heaven, you will still make her worthy your attention and love. Out of compassion to me, from compassion to her, keep your resolution to the end. I will go see her, and if she complains——If she complains, comfort her, Sir, and seem sensible of her uneasiness. Her reason will be more tractable, when her heart is less agitated. Let her hate me at this moment, I expect it; I am not at all surprized. But if the bitterness of her temper alters the sentiments of nature, if her confidence in you grows weaker, all is lost. The goodness of her heart is my only resource; and 'tis only by a constant mildness we can prevent the inflaming her resentments. After all, the trials I put her to are grievous at her age, and it rests upon you to be her support.

These precautions were useless; whether it was vanity or delicacy, Hortensia had resolution enough to conceal her chagrin from the eyes of her father. Good, said Lufane; she knows how to conquer herself, and weak minds only are to be despaired of: the day following they dined *tête-à-tête*, and in profound silence. On getting up from table, Hortensia ordered the horses to be put to. Where are you going? says her husband.——To make my apology for yesterday's unpolicy.——Go, Hortensia, since you will go; but, if you value my repose, take your last farewell of those women.

Artenice and Olympia, to whom the countess of Fierville had related the scene she had with Lufane, readily imagined that he had prevented Hortensia from going to the play with them. Yes, said they, it must be him; we never saw him but
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for a few moments, but we soon found him out. He is an unfeeling, absolute man, who will only make you unhappy.—He never spoke to me hitherto, but in the tone of friendship. It is true he has particular notions, and a manner of life, not conformable to the custom of the world, but —But let him live by himself, and leave us to enjoy our amusements in peace. Do you ask him to follow you? A husband is the man in the world we can do the best without, and I don't see what occasion you have for his advice to receive whom you like, and to visit whomsoever you please. No, Madam, said Hortensia, it is not so easy as you imagine, for a woman at my age to contradict a husband's will, who has acted so generously by me. She yields; alas she is quite a slave, replied Artenice. Ah! my dear, you don't know what it is to have once given way to a man with whom we are obliged to pass our whole lives. Our husbands, if they are not our slaves, are our tyrants. Their authority is a torrent that gathers strength at every pace; you cannot stop but at its source; and I speak this with a knowledge of the cause. Having had the misfortune twice to please my husband, I had a six months trouble to overcome that ascendance which my weakness had given him, and without an unheard-of effort of courage, I had been no more spoken of, and should have been quite an undone woman. That depends on disposition, says Hortensia, and my husband is not one of those whom obstinacy can have any weight with. Undeceive yourself, replied Olympia, mildness is lost upon them, it is their very obstinacy by which we conquer them. It is the shame and fear of being ridiculous which restrains them. What are you afraid of? We have sufficient advantage in being handsome enough, while

while they have nothing to reproach us with. Your cause is the general cause of women, and even the men themselves will be of your side, Hortensia instanced as an exception, her own cousin, who had made Lusane perfectly happy. They replied, that her cousin was weak; that if the life she had led was agreeable to her, it was that she knew no better, but that a woman thrown into the great world, who had tasted the delights of it, and who had been a principal ornament to it, was not designed to be shut up in the lonely solitude of her own house, and in the narrow circle of a low acquaintance, whom nobody knows. They talked to her then of an elegant ball, which the dutchess of——was to give the next day. All the handsome women in the town are to be there, said they; if your husband prevents your going, it will be an action which will absolutely call out for vengeance, and we really advise, as friends, to lay hold of that opportunity to make an *eclat*, and separate yourself from him.

Altho' Hortensia was very averse to following such violent counsels, she could not help being uneasy in her mind, that her situation should become the topic of public conversation, and that she should be sought for in vain at those entertainments, where she had before been so much taken notice of. When she came home she received a card, which she read with great impatience, and sighed when she had gone through it. She held it in her trembling hand when her husband came up to her. 'Tis only a card of invitation, said she with a negligent air, to the dutchess's ball.—Very well, Madam.—Well, Sir, I shan't go, you may be perfectly easy—But why, Hortensia, should you deprive yourself of innocent pleasures? Have I ever debarred you from them?

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The honour done to you in this invitation is equally flattering to me, as it is polite to you; go to the ball, eclipse every thing that is amiable there, it will be a triumph to me. Hortensia could not conceal her joy and surprize, Ah! Lusane, said she to him, why are you not the same always? now I see the husband I hoped to meet with. I recover him again, but is it for a long time? Lusane's company met in the evening, and Hortensia was even adorable. They proposed parties for supper, parties for the play; she engaged herself with the best grace in the world. Lively with the men, engaging with the women, she charmed all around her. Lusane alone durst not yet give a loose to that joy her behaviour inspired. He foresaw this good humour could not remain a long time unclouded. However, he whispered a word to his valet de chambre, and the next morning, when his wife called for her domino, it seemed like a theatrical incident, they brought her a dress for the masquerade, on which the hand of Flora seemed to have scattered the finest flowers of spring. These flowers, in which the art of Italy equals even nature, and deceives the delighted eye, these flowers twisted up into garlands, bordered the light weaves of a silk tissue of the brightest colour. Hortensia, in love with her dress, her husband and herself, could not conceal her joy. Her glass, which she consulted, promised her wonderful success, and that is an oracle never known to deceive. In appearing at the ball, she enjoyed the flattering emotion, which arises from an unanimous admiration, and that flux and reflux, that buzz and bustle have something in them very agreeable to a young woman. Lusane, no doubt, was in great favour at her return; it seemed as if she had a mind to paint to him all the
trans-

transports she had inspired. At that moment he received her caresses without reflection, for the wisest sometimes forget themselves, but when he recovered himself, a masquerade, says he, a domino, a dress, can these turn her young giddy head! alas! how much more have I to go through with, before I shall see her as I wish!

Hortensia had seen at the masquerade all that giddy acquaintance her husband so earnestly desired to break all connection with. He would do well, said they, to be a little more reasonable, and restore you to your friends. He will absolutely be the butt of all ridicule, and we have made a party to plague him wherever he comes; tell him, for his own repose, that he had better suffer us to visit you as usual. If we are so unfortunate as to displease, far be it from us to incommode him; let him satisfy himself by not being visible, but don't let him desire his wife to be so too. Alarmed at these menaces, Hortensia intimated to her husband, that it was thought very strange that his doors should be shut in that manner, and that folks necessarily began to complain of it, and proposed, indeed, even mentioning it to him. Let them, says he, I'll teach them a good method to take their revenge of me; let them each marry a pretty wife, live with her and his friends, and shut the door in my face, whenever I break in upon their happiness.

Some days after, two of these young gentry, who had been piqued at not having admittance to Hortensia, met Lufane at the opera, and accosted him to know the reason of the unpoliteness of his Swiss. Sir, says the Chevalier de St. Placide to him, you know that the marquis of Cerval, and myself, have been twice to wait upon you?—Yes, gentlemen, I know you gave yourself that trouble.—Neither you nor your lady

lady were to be seen.—That often happens.—Yet you receive company.—We see hardly any but our own friends.—We are the friends of Hortensia, and in Valsain's reign we visited her every day. Ah! Sir, that Valsain was a most amiable man! to be sure she has not lost by the change, but he was the honestest, the most complacent husband—I know it.—He now, for example, had not the least jealousy.—How happy he was!—You speak as if you envied him, is it true what they say that you are not so perfectly at ease? Oh! gentlemen, whenever you marry, beware of loving your wives; jealousy is a most terrible thing.—What! seriously then you are stricken?—Yes, alas! for my sins.—But Hortensia is a woman of such honour—I know it very well.—She lived with Valsain like an angel.—I hope she'll live the same with me.—Why then do you do her the injustice of being jealous?—'Tis an involuntary sensation which I can give no account of.—You allow then that it is a folly.—It is so; for I cannot see a man of a fine person, or distinguished merit, near my wife, without my head being turned, and for that very reason I shut my doors against the most amiable people in the world.—The marquis and I, says the chevalier, are no dangerous people, and we hope.—You! gentlemen, you would make my life miserable. I know you too well not to be afraid of you, and, since I must confess it, I have absolutely insisted upon my wife's never seeing you.—But, Mr. president, this compliment is rather indelicate.—O gentlemen, it is the best that a jealous man can make. Chevalier, said the marquis, when Lufane had left them, we seem'd to have some notion of *bumming* the queer fellow.—Oh! that was what I intended.—I believe upon my soul that he *bums* us.—Egad I suspect it, but I will
be

be revenged—How—As one generally is revenged of a husband.

At supper with Madam de Bellune that very evening, they represented Lufane as the most odious man in the world; and his young wife, says my lady, has the complaisance to suffer him to contradict her! I'll teach her a better lesson. Madam de Bellune's house was the rendezvous of all the gay, giddy people of the court and city, and the secret she used to draw them together, was by getting all the pretty women to her rout. Hortensia was invited to a ball which she gave. It was necessary Lufane should be acquainted with it; but without the appearance of asking his consent, she only just hinted it *en passant*. No, my dear, says Lufane to Hortensia, Madam de Bellune's house is not a proper place for you. Her ball is but a rendezvous, which you should not appear at. The public are not obliged to believe you more infallible than another; and to avoid all the suspicion of a shipwreck, it is best to avoid the rock. The young lady, more offended at this refusal, as she little expected it, burst forth into complaints and reproaches.—You abuse, said she to him, the authority I have given up to you; but have a care of going too far. I understand you, Madam, answered Lufane, in a more firm and serious tone; but as long as I have any esteem for you, I shall be under no fears, and I shall fear still less when I cease to esteem you. Hortensia, who had not affix'd any idea to the words which just escaped him, blush'd at the sense which they seemed to intimate, and burst into tears. Lufane laid hold of that moment, when the vivacity of her temper gave way to her confusion. I am become odious to you, but what is my crime? Namely, that I would save you from the dangers which encompass you, divest
you

you from whatever might fix a stain, I don't say upon your innocence, but upon your reputation, and make you regard in time, what you ought to regard always.—Yes, Sir, your intentions are good, but you mistake. You would have me love my duty, and you make it a servitude. There may be consequences, perhaps, in my connexions, you may foresee; but the knot must be untied, not broken; and you ought rather to detach me insensibly from the persons you dislike, than make yourself ridiculous by treating me as a prisoner. When ridicule is ill placed, answered Lusane, it retorts upon the person who uses it. That prison you complain of, is the refuse and asylum of good morals, and shall be that of peace and happiness too whenever you please. You reproach me with want of conduct in regard to the world and your self. I have my reasons. I know at your age the contagion of fashion; example and habit every day make new progress; and unless the communication is broken, there is no answering for consequences. It costs me much pain, indeed, to speak to you in this determined tone; but it is my tenderness for you enables me to do it; a friend, upon occasion, ought to know when to be dissatisfied with his friend. Be assured then, that as long as I love you, I shall have resolution enough to oppose you; and woe betide you if I forsake you.—Woe to me! you have a very low opinion of me, indeed, and must esteem me very lightly, if you think I am lost from the moment you cease to keep guard over me! Go, Sir, I know how to conduct myself; and Valsain, who always did me justice, had never any cause to repent of the confidence he reposed in me. I must confess to you, in taking a husband, I did not design to take a tyrant. To yield to your will requires more resolution or weakness than I am
 mis-

mistress of. All these restrictions you impose on me are painful to me, and I shall never accustom myself to them.

Lufane, left alone, could not help reproaching himself for the tears he had made her shed. What have I undertaken, said he, and what a trial is it for my soul! I her tyrant! I! who love her better than my life, and feel my heart wounded at every complaint. I despair, though I should persist, and if I give ground one moment, I am certain to lose all the fruits of my resolution. One step into this world she is so fond of, will inevitably engage her to make another; I must then maintain this character, cruel as it appears to her, and still more cruel to myself.

Hortensia passed the night in the most terrible agitation. All the violent methods crowded upon her imagination, but the integrity of her mind was alarmed. Why, said she, when her anger was a little calmed, why should I make myself so uneasy? This man is master of himself and me, because he does not love me, but if he ever should love me, I should triumph in my turn. Let me employ the only arms which nature has furnished me with, mildness and seduction.

Lufane, who had not closed his eyes, came in the morning, with an air of friendship, to ask how she had passed the night. You ought to know, said she to him, you who find such pleasure in giving me uneasiness. Ah! Lufane, is it for you to create my unhappiness? who could have told me I should ever repent of a choice, which I made myself with such frankness and sincerity? In pronouncing these words, she stretched out her hand to him, and the two most eloquent eyes that love ever spoke from, reproached him with ingratitude. O thou dearest part of myself, said he, embracing her, believe me, all my

my pleasure and all my wishes are to make you happy. I would have your path of life strewed over with flowers, but suffer me to take away the thorns. Let your inclinations be such, which can cost you no regret, and be assured they shall be complied with in my mind, as soon as they are formed in yours. The only law I wish to impose upon you, is your own will, not that of a moment, which is only a whim, a mere caprice, but that which shall arise from reflection and experience, that which you will have ten years hence. I feel for you the tenderness of a lover, the fondness of a friend, and the vigilant inquietude of a father. This, this is my heart, it is worthy of you, and if you are still so unjust to me as to complain, you will not, you cannot be so long. This speech was accompanied with the most striking marks of passionate love, and Hortensia seemed sensible of it. Eight days passed away in the most happy union of mutual understanding, which can possibly subsist between man and wife. Hortensia joined the most endearing caresses, which love, holding intelligence with duty, seems to steal from modesty. Those are the most subtle threads which can wind about a tender heart. But was all this sincere? Lusane believed it to be so, and I believe it too. After all, she would not be the first woman whose inclinations have agreed with her designs, and whose politics coincided with her pleasures.

One of those days however was approaching, which are consecrated to folly and mirth, and during which we are more ridiculous indeed, but infinitely less happy than our forefathers. Hortensia intimated to Lusane her desire to make an entertainment, where music should precede the supper, which should be followed by a dance. Lusane gave his consent in the most agreeable man-

manner in the world, but not without precaution. He settled with his wife upon the choice and number of people she was to invite, and cards were sent about according to that list.

The day came, and every thing was prepared with the care of a splendid and magnificent lover. But that very morning, the Swifs desired to speak to his master. Besides, the persons who are to come according to the list, my lady insists, said he, that all should be let in, who come to the ball. Is that your pleasure, Sir? Undoubtedly, said Lufane, dissembling his surprize, and you are never to doubt my approbation of whatever your mistress orders you to do. At that very moment she came in to him, and after he had told her what had happened, you have exposed yourself, said he, to the danger of being put to the blush before your servants, you have done more, you have hazarded what a wife cannot be too careful of, the confidence of your husband. Is it for you, Hortensia, to use stratagem with me? If I was not fully persuaded of the honesty of your mind, what idea would you now give me, and what would be the result of your imprudence? The pleasure of afflicting me for a moment, and making me more distrustful of you, than I wish to be. Ah! let me esteem you for ever, and respect yourself, as much as I respect you. I will not humble you so far, as to revoke the order you have given, but you will chagrin me exceedingly, if you do not revoke it yourself, and your to-day's conduct shall be the rule of all my life. I have committed a fault says, she, I perceive it, I will repair it. I will go and write this moment that I shall have neither concert, nor supper, nor ball, at my house. I will not make a parade of joy, when death is in my heart. The public will know I am wretched, but I am
tired

tired of dissimulation. Lufane falling immediately at her feet, if I loved you less, said he, I should yield to your reproaches, but I adore you, I will conquer myself. It would kill me with grief to be hated by my wife, but I cannot live with the shame of having betrayed her by abandoning her. I felt a sensible satisfaction in consenting to your giving this entertainment; you would now break it off, because I exclude those only who are unworthy to approach you. In this instance, you shew me, that a trifling world is more dear to you, than your husband. It is enough; I will give orders, that the entertainment shall not take place. Hortensia, struck to the bottom of her heart with what she had heard, and still more affected at the tears she had seen fall from his eyes, returned again into herself. Why should I be so obstinate, said she? The people he would alienate me from, are they my friends? Will they sacrifice the slightest of their interest to me? And yet I destroy the repose of my own life. I make myself perpetually uneasy, I renounce and poison every thing, which can create my happiness for them! 'Tis passion, 'tis vanity misleads me. Have I ever once considered, whether my husband had reason on his side? I have only been reflecting on the humiliating circumstance of obeying. But who is to command, if not the wisest? I am a slave, and who is not, or who ought not to be so to their duty? I call that good man my tyrant, who conjures me, with tears in his eyes, to be careful of my reputation! where then is this haughtiness I reproach him with! I should have perhaps much more to complain of, if he were as weak as I am. I afflicted him at that very moment, when he shews the most delicate regard for my conduct. These are his injuries, these are the real ones, and not such

such as I attribute to him. Go, says she, to one of her maids, go tell your master, that I want to speak to him. She had scarce delivered her message, when she began to be in a terrible fright. I am going then to consent to make myself miserable all the days of my life. For I must own there is no amusement, but in the great world; and all these good sort of people he wants me to live amongst, are not half so agreeable as Valsain's friends used to be. As this reflection had altered her disposition a little, she contented herself with telling Lufane, she was willing once more to give him his way. She sent her excuses to those persons who intended coming to the ball, and the entertainment, which was as elegant as possible, had all the ease and chearfulness of joy, without any tumult or confusion.

Tell me, my dear, said Lufane to Hortensia, has there been any thing wanting in our entertainment? You disguise, says she to him, sometimes the restrictions you lay upon me, but all days are not rejoicing ones. It is in the void, in the silence of the house, that a woman at my age grows weary and dissatisfied, and breathes the poison of discontent. And if you have a desire that my youth should be consumed away by this poison, you will soon have that pleasure. No, Madam, said he to her, stung to the heart with grief, I have not that cold cruelty you suspect me of. If I must renounce my care of making you happy, that tender, pleasing, and affectionate care, which ought to be the purpose of my whole life, at least don't let me be reproached with having embittered, and empoisoned all your days. Neither I, nor the virtuous friends I have chosen for you, can make you amends, it seems, for what I deprive you of. In the multitude of people round about us, my house is become a frightful

ful solitude to you; you have the hardiness to tell me so to my face. I must restore you then to that liberty, without which you can love nothing. I have but one particular favour to request of you: to-morrow I expect another set of company, and if you don't think them worthy of taking up some of your time, if they cannot fill up the room of that world which you prize so much; all is over, you are at your liberty, act as you please. Hortensia very readily comply'd with his request. She was very sure he could offer her nothing so valuable as her liberty, but it was no very dear purchase to undergo this slender trial.

The next morning she saw her husband enter the room, with a countenance which sparkled with love and joy. Here, says he, this is the company I would propose to you. If you are not content with them, I know not how to amuse you. Let any one imagine the surprize this sensible mother was in, at the sight of her two children whom she had had by Valsain. My children, said Lufane, taking them up in his arms to bring them to Hortensia's bed, embrace your mother, and win from her that affection, that care, that tenderness for you, that she may take her share with me in the education of you. Hortensia received them to her bosom, and bathed them with her tears. In expectation, continued Lufane, that nature will bless me with the title of father, love and friendship have made me one, and I take a pleasure in fulfilling those duties. Come, my dear, said Hortensia, this is the dearest and most affecting of all your lessons to me. I had forgot that I was a mother, I had almost forgot I was a wife; you recal me to my duties, and these bands re-united, shall confirm me to you in the most affectionate attachment all the days of my life.